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THE MONTH

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COMMENT

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A. A. STEPHENSON

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Such an outlook is quite alien to the policy of *The Catholic Herald*. We do indeed realise the duty of noticing, as fully as we are able, Catholic books in the usual sense of the phrase. Such books may easily be overlooked by the general press, and, in the interest of publishers and our readers, we feel we have an obligation to choose the best reviewers for important Catholic books. Even so, we exercise a careful selection for many religious books, while they are of great value for certain purposes of devotion, catechetical instruction, prayer, etc., are not really suitable for extended notice in a paper of our character. We think that it is more important to discriminate according to the real importance of the book and to give longer notices to original and thought-provoking Catholic work.

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STAPLES

COMMENT

IN HIS CHRISTMAS EVE allocution, Pope Pius XII called for "the renunciation of experimentation with atomic weapons, the renunciation of their use, and the general control of armaments." To prevent his message from being misinterpreted, His Holiness hastened to add: "We do not hesitate to declare, as we have previously declared, that the sum total of these precautions, as an object of international agreement, is an obligation on the conscience of nations and their leaders. We say 'the sum total of these precautions,' because the reason why they are morally binding is also that equal security must be established for all. If, however, only the first point, concerning experimentation, were put into effect, the result would be that that condition would not be verified, the more so since sufficient reason would be given to doubt a sincere desire to put into effect the other two conventions."

This necessary and salutary admonition to work unceasingly for peace certainly does not imply that the Pope cherishes any illusions concerning peaceful coexistence. Indeed, in the same message he declared it impossible to approve of coexistence unconditionally, and "certainly not at the price of truth and justice." Neither does it follow that the Holy See believes international agreement on armament control to be feasible without a decisive change in the international moral and spiritual climate; in fact, the main burden of the Christmas Eve allocution was a warning, not only against Communism, but also against the folly of those post-Christians who imagine that peace may be established without regard for true spiritual and moral values.

It is therefore in no way disrespectful to the Holy See to turn to the viewpoint of a realistic American politician who does not believe that the international control of armaments is possible so long as the free world has to deal with the Soviet régime. According to Senator Knowland, Republican leader in the U.S. Senate, in existing conditions the international control of disarmament must be either superfluous or quite ineffective. In the Senator's own words: "If the Soviet Government were honestly desirous of disarmament, international control would be superfluous. If the Kremlin is resolved to violate agreements concerning disarmament, the absolute empire it exercises over its vast territory

excludes the possibility of effective international control. In other words, in arriving at international agreement on disarmament, it is possible to have confidence only in those nations whose citizens are free to watch over the actions of their governments. In effect, the existence of a vigilant, local opposition is the only real guarantee of the honesty of a government. In fact, as I have said before repeatedly, the absolutely indispensable precondition for any true settlement of differences between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. is the restoration of freedom to the Russian people and to the oppressed satellite nations."

If Senator Knowland's argument is unanswerable, this does not mean that there is any valid reason for the despair now prevailing in the West, where coexistence at no matter what price is conceived to be the only alternative to a thermo-nuclear war of annihilation. Indeed, there is no greater fallacy than the prevalent assumption that it is impossible to resist Soviet imperialism without fear of unleashing a nuclear holocaust. In the words of a distinguished American journalist, Herrymon Maurer: "Unquestionably, world Communism must be handled with diplomatic care. It does indeed pose a threat of all-out war. But it is not obsessed by the all-or-nothing complexes of Nazi totalitarianism. In the past it has shown no reluctance to wage limited wars of a peripheral sort, but it has sought actively to avoid wars that could threaten its central territories. Communism will reach its decision about launching all-out war strictly on the basis of calculations as to whether it could win such a war. To be sure, it might miscalculate and start a nuclear holocaust any day, any hour. The problem of preventing such a war is urgent and complex. But it is an altogether different problem from that of preventing a progressive series of limited conquests. Nothing in the records of Communist history and theory suggests that the Communist rulers will start an all-out war because of pique or anger or desperation over counter-manoeuvres in particular areas like Formosa—so long, at least, as these counter-manoeuvres are limited and do not involve nuclear weapons. The free world, in short, can undertake positive policies to block or even to resist aggression in specific areas with reasonable certainty that they will not thereby provoke a disaster."¹

The truth is that unless the West stands unequivocally on moral

¹ *The New Leader*, New York, 14 April, 1955.

principles and reveals itself as the champion of all those oppressed by the Kremlin, there is no possibility of the peaceful coexistence of nations in this thermo-nuclear age. Moreover, if only there were a spiritual resurgence of dimensions sufficient to enable Western governments thus to act in accordance with Christian principles, before long the weakness of the Soviet régime would become apparent to all.

Even the Korean war came within a stone's throw of destroying Communist power on the Chinese mainland. Again to quote Herrymon Maurer: "The Korean war was not won. The important fact about that war, however, is that, unbeknown to the people and the policy-makers, it was actually being won. Addled by the debate on whether to bomb Manchuria or withdraw from Korea altogether, the U.S. fell into uncertainty, and in the spring of 1952 acceded to Communist cease-fire feelers even before formal proposals were made. Yet, even at the time, there was solid evidence that the war had already worn down the farm-based economy of China nearly to the point of collapse, and that the Trans-Siberian Railway had become jammed into near uselessness. Had the war of manoeuvre continued, casualties might have remained grievous, but Chinese Communism might have fallen."¹ A further indication of the weakness of Red China is the fact that no less than eighty per cent of the Chinese Red Army soldiers taken prisoner in Korea decided to join the Nationalists in Formosa rather than return to the empire of Mao Tse-tung.

It is a safe assumption that the Korean war was an important factor in persuading the Kremlin temporarily to abandon overt aggression against the free world. Certainly it convinced Moscow of the dangers of undertaking similar adventures without first ensuring the absence of united Western resistance. Should Moscow embark on a similar offensive against Formosa, or elsewhere, the West should welcome the challenge unhesitatingly; for whereas the acceptance of the challenge would in no sense increase the danger of global war (provided that the West refrained from the employment of nuclear weapons), a limited war for the defence of Formosa could result in the unlimited economic and moral attrition of the Chinese Communist régime, and might well be the means of liberating the entire Chinese mainland at comparatively little cost to the free world. For that reason there is

¹ *The New Leader*, New York, 14 April, 1955.

little prospect of an attack on Formosa until Peking has finally succeeded in breaking the spirit of the Chinese people. For the same reason, again, it would be the extreme of folly for the West to seek to hinder the Chinese Nationalists if they decide—what is in the interest of free men everywhere—to take the initiative as a means of preventing the consolidation of Chinese Communist power, and of rousing the mainland while a rebellion is yet possible. In the words of Frank Borkenau, in an article in the *American New Leader* of 30 January 1956: "It is almost certain that now, to protect their beloved farm plots from the greedy hands of the Communist régime, to avoid being driven into the cities by the millions—in short, to avoid all the horrors now descending on them—the Chinese peasants, intellectuals and soldiers would welcome not only the much-reformed Chiang Kai-shek but Emperor Pu-yi, the Dowager Empress of evil memory, or even all the evil spirits of Buddhist hell, if only they could rid them of a régime which, after having freed their land from usurers and corruptionists, is now taking it away wholesale. In such a situation, no American bombs, no massive Kuomintang invasion, but simply a few Nationalist parachutists might have been enough to rouse whole provinces to revolt and to threaten the régime's very existence. Never could smaller forces exert a greater threat; never could one of the world's worst aggressors be maimed at a cheaper price and with less risk of major war." It is of course true, as the Korean war demonstrated, that even limited war with conventional weapons can be very terrible, but it must be realised by the free world that unless it is prepared to make the necessary sacrifices our civilisation cannot hope to survive.

It must also be realised that if ever America should succumb to the temptation to "go it alone," and become "bomb-happy" in the process, this will be the direct consequence of the isolation of the U.S. Government and of its inability to call on the rest of the free world for the manpower necessary to man freedom's frontiers. It is in this context that Mr. Dulles's recent interview with *Life* magazine should be interpreted. It is true that on the occasions mentioned by Mr. Dulles there was no danger of global war—for the simple reason that Communist China was then unable to contemplate even a limited war against a united West. On a future occasion, however, circumstances might well be different and a similar diplomacy might lead to disaster. Yet, if that should

happen, the primary responsibility will lie, not with the irresponsible U.S. politicians concerned, but with those Western pacifists but for whom the question of America "going it alone" would never have arisen; and it cannot be insisted upon too strongly that pacifism, by leaving the West defenceless by means other than the use of thermo-nuclear weapons, increases enormously the danger that, in despair, a future President of the U.S. may give the order which, when executed, will leave the now inhabited world a barren and forbidding desert.

The most probable outcome of pacifist irresponsibility, however, is the end of human freedom in a Soviet-dominated world; for while it is true that there is nothing more likely to induce irresponsibility in Washington than its isolation from the rest of the free world, the isolation of the U.S. is nevertheless the unconcealed objective of the Kremlin, whose aim does not appear to be that of ruling over a world reduced to ashes. No doubt Moscow assumes that once Washington is isolated it will be deterred from starting a push-button war of annihilation by a combination of the remnants of Christian scruple and a post-Christian fear of death.

Meanwhile, Hydrogen-hysteria makes the peoples of Europe clutch in despair at the straw of peaceful coexistence; and the logic of this mood cannot indefinitely exclude native Communists from participation in the governments of Italy and France, or from an effective share in the leadership of the British trade unions. In Germany, the consequences will be no less disastrous. In the words of the British Labour M.P., Denis Healey: "This strategic confusion is particularly disastrous in its effect on Germany. 1955 saw Western Germany enter N.A.T.O. as an independent state; it also saw Germany assert her independence by entering into diplomatic relations with Russia against American advice. N.A.T.O. now depends for its very survival on the loyalty of Western Germany. But over-emphasis on the thermo-nuclear deterrent has made many Germans feel that their security will be assured by the atomic stalemate even if they make no effort to help N.A.T.O. organise the land defence of Western Europe and themselves. From this it is a short step to bargaining with Russia about reunification at the expense of Germany's membership in N.A.T.O."¹

¹ *New Leader*, 16 January 1956.

It is difficult to believe that this folly derives from an incapacity of the Western intellect to grasp the facts of the contemporary situation. It would appear, instead, to spring from a defect of the will. It is true that the Press has not sought adequately to enlighten the multitude concerning the necessity for sacrifice in the defence of freedom, but since it is the avowed aim of the popular Press, whose god is circulation, to give its readers what they want, the tone of the Press is as reliable an index of the popular will as the sounding-board of Westminster. If Western politicians and journalists are backward in urging the need for sacrifice, it is primarily because the people whose support they canvass dislike such exhortations. And if the ordinary Western citizen is not willing to make the sacrifices necessary for the defence of civilisation, the reason is that God, who commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves, has been dethroned in favour of the idol Comfort, the god of the uninhibitedly selfish. There is indeed little love lost among men once they reject God who is Love. One can only hope and pray for the spiritual resurgence that alone can redeem our society. In its absence, it will be but a matter of time before the entire world is enslaved by the New Barbarism.

THE RELIGION OF ENCOUNTER

By

A. A. STEPHENSON

IN *ENCOUNTER*'S FEBRUARY NUMBER, Mr. Philip Sherrard makes two statements about Christianity so inaccurate that one must conclude that he has never read the New Testament, let alone the Christian Fathers whose support he invokes. He denies that Christianity is exclusive in the sense of claiming to be unique, the one true religion; and he asserts that early, "authentic," Christianity *was* exclusive in the sense of offering its illumination and salvation only to an intellectual *élite*.

When he denies the unique character and exclusive claims of Christianity, Mr. Sherrard is apparently unaware that it is the pervasive assumption of the New Testament that "This is eternal life: to know God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent," that there is but one Lord (Christ), one faith (in Christ) and one salvation (by incorporation into Christ); "neither is there salvation in any other." When he challenges the assumption that the Christian era "marks an intellectual, or religious, advance upon the older period," Mr. Sherrard has been anticipated by Gibbon; and he is in the company of many a deist and Freemason when he maintains the surprising propositions that Christianity is only one phase of a far older wisdom, the primordial and perennial "true religion," that the so-called "Christian" principles are really not exclusive to Christianity, but universal and primordial, and that any particular religion, whether it be Christianity or Hinduism or Shintoism, "is authentic only to the degree to which it reflects them." It is when he claims the authority of St. Augustine for these views that Mr. Sherrard achieves originality. He writes that our folly in clinging to our illusory belief in the superiority of Christianity only indicates "how far we fail to realise what St. Augustine meant when he said: 'that which today is called Christian religion existed among the Ancients and has never ceased to exist from the origin of the human race until the time when Christ Himself came and men began to call Christian the true religion which already existed beforehand.'" It is, however, Mr. Sherrard who has failed to realise what St. Augustine meant. By a translation which, at least in the context in which he places it, is supremely misleading, Mr. Sherrard contrives to invoke the authority of St. Augustine for the view that "the true and universal religion" is not, specifically, Christianity, nor essentially related to Christ. What St. Augustine, however, was really saying, both in this passage (*Retractations*, I, 13, 3) and elsewhere, was that, although it was only at Antioch after the Resurrection that the name "Christians" was first heard, the *thing*—the one true religion whereby alone men may be saved—had always existed, and had always been *Christianity*.

Nothing could be more foreign to the mind of St. Augustine than the view that Christianity was just one phase of the perennial religion, a form of it equivalent in one historical period to paganism in another. On the contrary, St. Augustine often went

to extremes in regarding the old pagan gods as devils, and hundreds of his pages are filled with invective against paganism, by which he meant, not Mr. Sherrard's fourth-century A.D. sorcerers, but the old polytheistic paganism. He insisted, moreover, that there is no way of salvation except through Christ. Now, this doctrine raises an obvious difficulty, a problem which Christianity, with its exclusive claims, has always had to face. Some of his Japanese disputants put the question to St. Francis Xavier: "If Christianity is the one true religion, and Jesus Christ the only Saviour, and moreover the Son of a loving God, why did God the Father not send Him earlier? What is the fate of our ancestors?" As the question is relevant to Mr. Sherrard's article, as well as being of great interest and importance in itself, it is worth recalling St. Augustine's positive teaching on the point, a teaching that is complementary to his insistence on the exclusive character of Christianity. St. Augustine held that ever since the beginning of the human race there have been good and God-fearing men, and that these have been saved—and saved through Christ. In a letter in which he advises his friend, Deogratias, on certain objections put to the latter by a pagan acquaintance, Augustine points out that Christ is an eternal Person, the Word through whom all things were made and who, abiding eternally with the Father, governs every creature throughout the various periods of human history, now by one dispensation now by another; through Christ the creation, through Christ always the second creation that is redemption. "And so," he writes, "from the beginning of the human race, all who believed in Him and in some wise knew Him and lived righteous and religious lives according to His laws, whenever and wherever they lived, were saved through Him." The faith of the pre-Christians (not, *pace* Mr. Sherrard, the non-Christians) may differ only in temporal respect from the faith of the Christian: each is faith in Christ the Saviour, God's eternal Son through whom the world was made and is continuously redeemed:

For as *we* believe [in Christ the Word and Saviour] both as abiding with the Father and as having come in the flesh, so the men of old believed in Him both as abiding with the Father and as due to come in the flesh. The fact that what was then foretold as belonging to the future is now preached as a past event entails no difference in the actual faith or salvation . . . Consequently, it is one and the same true religion, under different names then and now, in a more hidden

manner in earlier times and in later days more plainly, that has all the time been meant [*significatur*] and practised, then by fewer and afterwards by a great number. From the beginning of the human race, at some times more obscurely, at others more clearly, according as Providence judged most suited to each particular time, Christ has never ceased to be prophesied; nor were there wanting men to believe in Him at any time from Adam down to Moses, and this not only in the race of Israel, which by a special dispensation was the people of prophecy, but also among other peoples, before He came in the flesh.¹

St. Augustine, therefore, denies all Mr. Sherrard's main positions. Where Mr. Sherrard holds that Christianity is only one form of "the true and universal religion," which happens to be called Christianity in our era, St. Augustine asserts that the true religion is, indeed, universal and perennial, but is, and always has been, Christianity, although only since Christ's coming upon earth has it borne that name. Where Mr. Sherrard denies the exclusive claims of Christianity, St. Augustine asserts them (it was primarily for these claims, incidentally, that the early Christians were persecuted under the Roman Empire). Where Mr. Sherrard denies the importance of the historical element in Christianity, St. Augustine asserts that the Incarnation is central in human history; to it the pre-Christian looked forward, as to it the Christian looks back; by faith in it both are saved. Where Mr. Sherrard would have the true religion the privilege of the clever, and conditioned by a certain "intellectual status," St. Augustine, remembering that the Father has "hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them to little ones," knows that it is the God-fearing and obedient who recognise and accept the perennial revelation. Where Mr. Sherrard finds no "religious advance" marked by the advent of Christ, St. Augustine sees in the two periods all the difference between candle-light and sunlight, between figure and reality: "what was only foreshadowed in the Old Law has been revealed in the New."

The great Alexandrian Christian, Origen, also studied this problem of the relation of Christianity to B.C. times: the question how far, and in what sense, Christianity was new and revolutionary. For the question had been raised long before St. Augustine, as early, in fact, as c. 180, by the eclectic Middle Platonist, Celsus. Celsus, with his Platonic background, thought in terms of

¹ Cf. *Sex quaestiones contra paganos*, chaps. 11, 12, 15.

eternal ideas and an immutable order imposed on the world from the beginning. Rejecting the ideas of development and growth, he repudiated Christianity as being essentially a historical religion with its central dogma of God born in the world in time. Like Mr. Sherrard, Celsus thought that Christianity's claim to be unique and exclusive underlined the paradox. But, understanding Christianity better than Mr. Sherrard, he knew that Christianity did make these claims, although even he did not grasp their precise implications. "So after all that time," he asked, "God suddenly decided, did he, to make men good again? Did he never trouble about it before?" The theological grandeur and infinite perspectives of Origen's reply justify its summary here, all the more as Augustine was deeply indebted to it, while Origen in his turn was generally developing the still earlier Christian tradition. His doctrine has lately been brilliantly expounded by Fr. J. Daniélou, S.J.¹

To Celsus, then, Origen, writing two generations later, answered that although the Incarnation was a recent event, Christ Himself was an eternal Person, "the first-born of all creation," the Light who "enlightens every soul born into the world." The Word had never been without interest in the world which He had Himself created; having made man, He never abandoned him; when He came, He came, not as a stranger, but "to his own." It is quite natural, then, that "in every generation God's wisdom (the Word or Logos) has come into the souls of religious men and made them His friends and prophets." Origen, indeed (conceiving the question primarily in terms of the relation of the Old to the New Testament) insisted that when the new Covenant was made, the old was abrogated. Yet there was no absolute antithesis between the two Testaments, nor was the Old, in its own time, valueless for salvation. For there was a positive relation between them; the Old Testament had a relative value as a figure and a foreshadowing of the New, which is the reality and the fulfilment. The people of the Old Law were not simply non-Christians, they were pre-Christians; the Old Testament has its face turned towards the New. But once the Christian era has dawned, it is impossible to read anything but Christ in the Old Testament. To reject progress and history, to refuse to acknow-

¹ An admirable translation of Fr. Daniélou's *Origène* by Walter Mitchell was published last year (*Origen*) by Messrs. Sheed and Ward.

ledge that the only sort of continuity here relevant is that which we define by the figure-reality, shadow-substance relationship, is to cling to shadows and symbols which have lost even their shadow-reality: "In the presence of the truth, the type and shadow came to an end, and when a temple was built in the Virgin's womb by the Holy Ghost and the power of the Most High, the stone-built temple was destroyed." "Origen's picture," writes Fr. Daniélou, "of the Jews standing before the Wailing Wall is a picture of the human race refusing to let go of its childhood and enter upon maturity."

But although the figure has served its purpose and consequently is destroyed when the reality which fulfils it has come, Origen equally insisted that, given certain conditions, the religions and sacrifices of the earlier, preparatory dispensations had a real value in their own time. This might, indeed, in any case be divined from the fact that God's serious (though not absolute) will to save all men is several times asserted in the New Testament. St. John, for instance, tells us: "He is a propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." The Blood shed on Calvary, and still offered in the Mass, was "shed for *the many* unto the remission of sins"—where "the many" refers to the whole human race, represented, as sometimes in the Hebrew idiom, not as a totality as in our idiom, but as a multitude. This doctrine is also deeply rooted in tradition; a century ago Passaglia brilliantly demonstrated the universality of God's saving will from two hundred Fathers and ecclesiastical writers. Salvation, naturally, supposes co-operation with the sufficient grace which, won by the merits of Christ, is offered to all men; and "positive infidels"—those who have had Christ preached to them and have rejected Him—are in a different position from merely "negative" infidels.

Mr. Sherrard, then, is wrong not only in denying the exclusiveness of Christianity in the sense of its being the one true religion, but also in asserting that it is exclusive in his sense of "esoteric." Mr. Sherrard had only to read the New Testament to learn that the Founder of Christianity invited all men to follow Him and commanded His Apostles to evangelise and baptise all nations. Yet he writes: "In its early stage, Christianity did not address itself to all alike," and he pleads that an authentic Christianity would be confined to an *élite*, who should be instructed in that supposed secret tradition of which the Church had later to "con-

ceal, even to deny, certain esoteric elements." For this doctrine Mr. Sherrard appeals to the authority of Origen. He might better have appealed to Origen's opponent, the pagan intellectual, Celsus, who, holding that salvation ought to be the preserve of a cultivated *élite*, rejected Christianity for this very reason, mocking the simple Christians of his time and ridiculing the Apostles as "miserable publicans and sailors." Celsus, therefore, charges primitive Christianity with just the same character which Mr. Sherrard regards as a mark of "corrupt" Christianity. Origen himself, indeed, does occasionally speak of an esoteric gnosis, or higher religious knowledge, in a way which the Church has at all times reprobated. But it is absurd to single out a few indiscreet remarks of a single writer and treat them as representative of early Christianity. Moreover, Origen's view, taken as a whole, is the very antithesis of Mr. Sherrard's position. Even when he speaks of a secret tradition, Origen, like his master, Clement, speaks of it as deriving from the Apostles or other close friends of Christ, not as going back behind Christianity. Again, the Alexandrian Christian gnosis was not simply contrasted with faith; it is faith's flowering; Origen much more often describes it as "enlightened faith." Moreover, it is the fruit of a supernatural revelation, not won by natural gifts. When meeting Celsus's attack, Origen distinguished the word "culture"; the real *paideia*, he said, is a wisdom which the world cannot give; it is a grace from God, in whose eyes the wisdom of the world is folly. For Origen, Fr. Daniélou has acutely written, the fundamental cleavage was between "the god of the philosophers, who is accessible only to the cultivated, and the Christian God of grace, who is approached through humility . . . Celsus [one might add, "and Mr. Sherrard"] thinks the vision of God accessible but difficult, Origen holds that it is inaccessible but easy." Celsus thought that the vision of God was the privilege of a chosen few; Origen knew that no natural ability could qualify a man for it, but that it was the gift of God and freely offered to all men. Mr. Sherrard underrates the riches of Christianity when he makes them dependent upon an exalted "intellectual status"; they are both greater than he thinks and also more lavishly bestowed. All Christians, as the name of baptism ("illumination") in the early Eastern Church suggested, are initiated into high mysteries, and all, as St. Peter insisted, are an *élite*, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people."

POEMS

By

QUENTIN STEVENSON

Maundy Thursday

TODAY is Maundy Thursday and tonight,
When we have finished supper, I shall climb,
Another Peter, up the Mount of Olives.
I shall be thinking how night's itching cold
Has killed already remembrance of that world
My Master built within the narrow upper room
Which I have cast behind me like a dream.

I shall be thinking only of the stones
That rub their jagged noses in my feet
And the hard trial of a night-long vigil.
And I shall know a burden on my eyes
And a thick mist within; and I shall feel
The timid skin of the still virgin turf. I shall forget
The unreal God out there and go to sleep.

Peter will strike the servant with his sword
And God will mend the wound his terror made
Knowing he did not strike for love of Him.
And I shall be dragged out onto a road
Of dropping nightmare, where I follow Him
Not to give help but to fulfil His grief:
I do not know the man of whom you speak.

When white light hardens to a thin red glare
And three red cries are all the blood I fear
And flesh is bread and that bread not yet broken
I shall go out and weep, but at last know,
Like some tired lover stepping from his bed
To a cold floor of duty, that my creed
Does not allow the freedom of despair.

The Convent Chapel

(for J. L.)

KNEELING this morning in the convent chapel
With its prim ghosts chanting through sharp red noses
I find in the nine year old who kneels beside me
That easy acceptance of the power of worship
Which in my dispossession I call peace.

It is Good Friday's mass; the sun redeemed
Burns through the fading saints behind the altar.
And this young boy praying because he knows no better
Wears all the altered pronouns in my poems
As if their shame were part of his own childhood.

Victus

(for J. F. S.)

EVIL is generous, will not walk alone.
How the parched earth can grow more parched with rain
I do not understand; but I am Cain
And Judas called me as a child his own.

In no man's Nazareth my bones have lain
Beside His bones, and she has watched her Son
Between the potter's field and cock of dawn
Sleep through the first Gethsemane, and known
This was her Calvary: Thy will be done.

Death being no more present on the Cross
Than in white Simeon's arms, God's mother keeps
Vigil not only by the womb; she shapes
Prayers so that all God's children may atone
With Judas fallen and the last cock flown.

THE GLASTONBURY LEGEND

By

GEOFFREY ASHE

OVER THE DRAINED Somersetshire marshes, the former island called Glastonbury Tor rears up like an enchanted pyramid. Its magic is older than Anglo-Saxondom, older than King Arthur, older even than the Faith which dwelt there uninterrupted for so long. To the Celts who inhabited the neighbouring lake-village in Caesar's day, the Tor was already sacred. Later generations ascribed its sanctity to an identification with Avalon, the rendezvous of departed spirits, and claimed to find the notion persisting through a millennium of Celtic twilight. In the first Christian century Belgic raiders destroyed the village. But the seaward communications remained open, and soon afterwards, we are told, St. Joseph of Arimathea landed near the foot of the Tor and preached the Gospel. He may or may not have brought the Holy Grail. Indubitably he built a church—a "wattled cell," in Wordsworth's phrase—which became the nucleus of a group of hermits. The wealthy convert presided there till his death. St. Patrick organised the community into an abbey; Arthur was laid to rest close by; King Ina rebuilt the Abbey; St. Dunstan enlarged it; the Old Church stood till 1184, the Abbey till 1539; and throughout the Middle Ages Glastonbury was held in such veneration that people called it *Roma Secunda*. The Reformers really had no choice. They smashed the buildings, dismembered the Abbot, and planted foreign Calvinists in the town. Gasquet described Glastonbury's end. What we lack is a credible version of its beginning.

Indeed, the story of Glastonbury has yet to be told as a continuous thing. Mr. Christopher Hollis, perhaps, came nearest to doing this; but it implies no disparagement to say that his *Glastonbury and England* is a collection of historical sketches rather than a history. In the past year or two, several editorial and

scholarly eyes have rested for a few moments on that strangely fascinating spot. *The Tablet* has printed a picture of an ostensible Grail,¹ and a book of broadcasts entitled *Myth or Legend?* has perpetuated the able discussion offered to listeners by Professor R. F. Treharne. Mr. Treharne, refreshingly enough, concedes Glastonbury's claim to be the first Christian shrine of Britain, with a lifetime going far back into Roman days. But he follows Armitage Robinson, the iconoclastic Dean of Wells, in rejecting St. Joseph as a twelfth-century interloper, devoid of any traditional status, and in denying the supposed Celtic identification of Glastonbury with Avalon.

This last question is very difficult, much too difficult to unravel in a few words. One of the chief negative arguments—an argument of the type which tends to be stretched agonisingly far—is the assertion that neither the Avalon identification nor any other part of the Glastonbury lore appears in Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1135), so that it must all be a concoction of the Arthurian romancers who followed him. Setting aside this Avalon issue with a bare note of interrogation, I would like to pause on the slightly less elusive problem of Joseph. What we must ask, of course, is not “Did Joseph build the Old Church?” but “Is there evidence for an early tradition that he did?” If such evidence emerges, it will then be legitimate to ask where the rumour came from, and what historical fact underlies it.

The first author who must be named is William of Malmesbury, who flourished from 1120 to 1140, or thereabouts. He explored the records at Glastonbury Abbey, saw the Old Church, and wrote a book *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae*, which he dedicated to Henry de Blois, the Abbot. This was in the 1130's. The oldest surviving copy is unfortunately much later. There are signs that William revised his views, and we do not know what he finally decided as to the date of the original mission. The treatise does begin with a version of the Joseph story, and a fairly temperate one at that. No Grail occurs in it. Joseph is represented as coming to Britain with twelve followers. He acquires land at Glastonbury, builds the church, preaches, and dies. But the whole passage may be an interpolation belonging to the late twelfth century or early thirteenth; certainly the text is in a bad way. According to modern critics, the interpolator

¹ 6 August, 1955.

may simply have adapted the Grail matter from the Arthurian cycle, which took shape from 1150 onwards. Perhaps he did. Personally I do not see why he should have omitted the Grail. But in any event, it is true that we cannot safely cite William of Malmesbury as an authority for the tale about Joseph.

What he probably thought in 1125 appears from a long digression in his *Acts of the Kings of Britain*—a digression which is simply a draft of the *De Antiquitate* account. First he mentions a tradition (since exploded) about papal missionaries sent over in A.D. 166, who built the Old Church. Then he notes a further tradition implying that they did not build it, but only restored it.

There are documents of no small credit, which have been discovered in certain places to the following effect: "No other hands than those of the disciples of Christ erected the church of Glastonbury." Nor is it dissonant from probability: for if Philip, the Apostle, preached to the Gauls, as Freculphus relates in the fourth chapter of his seventh book, it may be believed that he planted the word on this side of the Channel also. But, that I may not seem to balk the expectations of my readers by vain imaginations, I shall leave all doubtful matter and proceed to the relation of substantial truths.

This is clear enough. William, and presumably the monks at the Abbey, recognised the existence of a belief in a Christian advent during the first century. But they knew nothing about it, or nothing worth recording. They preferred not to name any specific person.

The general idea of a mission to Britain in early times rests mainly on two or three passages in the Fathers and several hagiographical odds and ends. Tertullian says:

Regions of Britain which have never been penetrated by Roman arms have received the religion of Christ.

Origen has a few references which add very little. Eusebius, however, makes a truly astonishing statement:

The Apostles passed beyond the ocean to the isles called the Britannic Isles.

Gildas, grumbling at his fellow-Britons midway through the sixth century, observes in passing:

These islands received the beams of light, that is, the holy precepts of Christ, the true Sun . . . at the latter part, as we know, of the reign of Tiberius Caesar.

Gildas' allegation would be entirely worthless if it were not for the parenthesis "as we know," which argues a more or less familiar belief. He does not cite any authority.

Robert Persons, in his pamphlet *The Three Conversions*, tried to fill in some details about this ancient evangelisation. Vague oral traditions (mostly Welsh) appear to have named St. Paul and the British princes Bran and Caractacus, whom Claudius carried off to Rome. St. Paul, it was said, converted Bran, who eventually returned to Britain; and Paul himself visited the island, thus justifying Eusebius' text. A far better documented legend concerns Paul's friend Aristobulus. Dorotheus, Bishop of Tyre, asserts as far back as A.D. 303: "Aristobulus, whom Paul saluted writing to the Romans, was Bishop of Britain." There are three other allusions to him in this capacity, the fullest being in a Greek martyrology.

Aristobulus was one of the seventy disciples, and a follower of St. Paul the Apostle, along with whom he preached the Gospel. . . . He was chosen by St. Paul to be the missionary bishop to the land of Britain, inhabited by a very fierce and warlike race. By them he was often scourged, and repeatedly dragged as a criminal through their towns. Yet he converted many of them. He was there martyred after he had built churches and ordained deacons and priests for the island.

All these particulars are doubtless fictitious, but the basic notion is not inherently absurd. Claudius' conquest during the 40's brought Britain violently into the Roman orbit and into the news. Imperial enterprise opened up the island to a rapid economic invasion. The Romans' quarrel with Druidism gave their new province a special religious interest, and Boudicca's rising excited the capital itself. Neither St. Paul nor St. Peter nor any other alert resident in Rome could have helped hearing constantly about British affairs. That a mission was at least contemplated is very likely. But William of Malmesbury could find no convincing record that any identifiable Christian actually came, or that any Christian, identifiable or otherwise, came by the long sea-route of the Phoenicians to the West Country.

Until the Angevin era nobody felt that the question mattered. Glastonbury's Old Church was certainly very old. It might be apostolic or sub-apostolic or later still, but, in any case, the hazy atmosphere of antiquity sufficed. By 1170 everything had altered. King Henry's feud with Becket; his attempt to nationalise the Church; his threat of schism; his marriage with the anti-clerical southerner Eleanor of Aquitaine; and the taste among royalists for troubadour verse and courtly romance, Provençal and half-heretical in inspiration—all these factors converged to give Glastonbury a fresh significance. For if the British Church could be traced as far back as the Roman, then its title to independence (meaning absorption into the British Monarchy) would appear stronger, and the Catholic dominion correspondingly weaker. Religious regionalism, subtle but definite, permeated the swiftly growing Arthurian cycle, itself the compensatory daydream of nobles thwarted by a papalist clergy. The church of the new western chivalry had to be co-equal with Rome, and that meant establishing an ancient and independent foundation. Under Eleanor's patronage, Chrétien de Troyes and other romancers elaborated that legend about an early mission which William of Malmesbury had glanced at and set aside.

They went beyond the historical aspect and undertook adventures in doctrine. They had lately rediscovered the Gnostic apocrypha, and now, not content with the first Christian comer as a mere missionary, they turned him into a mystagogue. In their fantasies Joseph received the Holy Grail, learned its magical "secrets" from Christ in person, brought it to Glastonbury, and entrusted it to a line of Keepers who constituted a non-apostolic priesthood superior to the Roman priesthood. The Quest, with its weird passwords and initiations, its relics of witchcraft and fertility-ritual, slowly contaminated the Arthur cult with neo-Gnostic syncretism. Glastonbury—not the loyally papal Glastonbury of the monks, but the vaguer circumambient Avalon—became *Roma Secunda* in an unprecedented sense. It became the Rome of an aristocratic theosophy with strictly insular pretensions.¹

¹ Cp. the uncompromising denunciation of the Grail myth in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, where the nationalistic element is stressed. Sir John Rhys and Jessie Weston argued that the "Glastonbury heresy" originated in the Abbey itself. That seems incredible. A challenge to Rome from such a quarter would not have passed unnoticed.

Throughout the countries where educated people spoke French, similar and related movements were going on. One has only to recall the Albigensian progress in Languedoc, the flirtation with Arab metaphysics in Poitiers and Paris. This fashionable anti-clerical mysticism came in with Courtly Love and went out with the Cathars. Its British form, embalmed in Arthurian romance, veered after a while toward orthodoxy. Catholics appropriated the Joseph story without prejudice to their Roman allegiance. Yet in some minds the role allotted to Glastonbury persisted. Even in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, two hundred and fifty years later, St. Joseph's immediate successor as Grail-Keeper is spoken of as "the first bishop of Christendom." A cult, however dilettante in spirit, which confronted Rome with such arrogant rivalry, could hardly do otherwise than delve back to Christian origins and make what it could of any discoverable hints.

The only question is: Why Joseph of Arimathea?

As we saw, there have been other legends about the first British mission, and the elements of these were already available in the twelfth century. St. Paul could have been chosen instead, and he had at least three points in his favour: his general fame, his special position in medieval heresy, and Eusebius' hint at a visit by an apostle. Would the choice of St. Paul as Glastonbury's founder have seemed too bold, too irreverent? Most unlikely, considering that the romancers traced Lancelot's descent to the family of Our Lord himself. Still, perhaps it did. What, then, about Caractacus and the captive princes? These were Britons of the blood royal, heroes in the fight against Rome, established figures in the national mythos. Then, again, there was Aristobulus, "one of the seventy disciples," with a really quite respectable claim. Yet the story-tellers passed him by, and passed by the princes too. For whatever reason, they made Joseph their protagonist. And Joseph, on the face of it, was a nobody. He had never found his way into popular Christian legend or the cult of the saints. Few apocryphal writers or hagiographers had broken the silence of the New Testament regarding his career after the Resurrection. But here we find him in the Angevin age, suddenly and wildly exalted as a counterpoise to St. Peter himself.

It is hard to explain this on the theory that the Grail romances and the *De Antiquitate* interpolation are pure invention, springing from the whim of some fanciful nationalist. Moreover, the idea

that the interpolator copied from the romancers appears very dubious in view of his failure to introduce the Grail. There must surely have been a prior belief too stubborn to dismiss. In 1125 William of Malmesbury had not heard it in any form circumstantial enough to justify a detailed account. But the Joseph story took literary shape as a part of the Arthurian cycle, and that cycle arose from an event subsequent to William's research: the Anglo-French annexation of the Celtic traditions preserved in Wales and Brittany. Geoffrey of Monmouth was the principal agent, but not the only one, and the French authors who developed the Grail myth owed much also to itinerant bards. It is at least arguable that the source was Celtic. One version was in fact attributed to a fifth-century "Melchinus of Llandaff." Some such travelling priest as St. David, who visited Glastonbury before the Saxon conquest, may have transmitted to his disciples a version of the Old Church's origin which the British monks of that time remembered but the English monks of a later age did not. William of Malmesbury therefore missed it when he came to the Abbey, whereas the Celtic revivalists received it by a circuitous route.

Whatever the truth, one point is most remarkable—that the legend should have attached itself to a saint unconnected with any known mission. In view of the journey involved, such a comparatively unadventurous person as Joseph is the very last Gospel convert we should expect to meet in Britain. Again it is hard not to feel the presence of an obstinate fact underlying the fable.

We possess, I think, two positive bits of data. In the first place, the original Glastonbury Christian must have been unusually wealthy, a great man in the vulgar sense. As his memory died away, this was the sole fact which the neighbourhood preserved. A large house, or the ruins of a large house, may have stood as a reminder. When monastic fabulists tried to identify him, of course as honourably as possible, the only biblical magnate who qualified was Joseph of Arimathea. The virtual absence of legends about St. Joseph left a welcome gap into which his exploit could be fitted. (And the guess *may* have been right!) Those who later felt the need to contrive a first-century beginning for the British Church preferred the continuous tradition of a familiar shrine to the unlocalised stories about St. Paul and the

princes. If Glastonbury was Avalon, the resting-place of their new hero King Arthur, so much the better. Then, faced with the further choice of accepting St. Joseph or forging a link between Glastonbury and a more splendid saint, they wisely chose the former alternative. Their aims were regrettable, but they unearthed a fragment of the past which seemed to ring true. After the romantic extravagances blew over, their tale about the rich disciple at Glastonbury passed into the Catholic heritage.

In the second place, it is clear that neither the proto-Christian nor any missionary associated with him—or, even roughly, contemporaneous with him—achieved much success among the Britons. A feeble attempt by someone whom we may call Aristobulus is not beyond credence, but there is no authentic trace of effective preaching or ecclesiastical organisation before the latter half of the second century. If we adopt an early date for Glastonbury, we must picture something lonely and uninfluential, perhaps not even aspiring to influence, yet softly building a reputation which proved potent when the Empire turned Christian and the age of monasticism set in.

The core of the tradition is, I would say, a fact, though not a very inspiring fact. Something like this could have been the way of it. After Claudius' conquest, the swarm of civilians who followed the Roman army included a merchant from Judaea. He came to Glastonbury for business reasons, he set up his household there, and he *happened* to be a Christian. Men of substance were exceptional in the early Church, but they did exist, and some carried on as usual after conversion. Business activity was never held incompatible with the Faith. The ship-owner Marcion is a case in point. He drew abnormal attention to himself by his scriptural scholarship and heretical doctrines, but there must have been an appreciable number like him who pursued their affairs in unspectacular orthodoxy. If such a man had settled in Britain, his house would have become a hostel for the occasional Christian preacher or traveller (Aristobulus, for example), and might well have continued thus for as long as his descendants remained. The foundation of a church on the spot, and the choice of that area by hermits, would have followed quite naturally, encouraged by the desire to purify a pre-Christian sanctuary.

This hypothetical merchant is not too madly improbable.

Immigrants did pour into Britain in the wake of the legions, and they did come from every part of the Empire. Collingwood estimates their number at 100,000. The fifty-odd recognised tomb inscriptions assignable to the first century include the names of several traders and at least one Syrian. Collingwood's figure, therefore, gives room for thousands of Syrians, dozens of Judaeans, and—surely—a Christian or two.

As to the motive which might have induced a rich Jew to come all the way to Glastonbury, several writers have suggested the tin trade. This undoubtedly brought Levantines to the south-western British promontory, and the Rev. L. S. Lewis, an antiquarian, mentions hearing a Somersetshire folk-song with some such refrain as "Joseph was in the tin trade." But the tin mines were in Cornwall, not Somerset, and by the middle of the first century continental competition had almost ruined them. Though the Romans tried to revive the industry, it never recovered sufficiently to attract investment or justify a rich man's personal exodus from one end of the Empire to the other.

While the Grail romances have no value as history, they do happen to hint at a rather intriguing line of thought. One of their chief characters is Vespasian, who governed Judaea under Nero. The things he is made to do in the romances need not detain us. But the curious point is that before coming to Jerusalem he was in Britain, and in just the right part of Britain. He served, in fact, under Claudius. When the Emperor wound up his personal campaign and went home, the Roman army split itself into columns radiating from London. Vespasian commanded the Second Legion, which moved south-westward. Subduing the Isle of Wight and the British hill-forts, he struck out over Salisbury Plain into the less populous land beyond. He may have advanced as far as Devon; he indubitably advanced as far as Somerset. Then he returned to Italy, and, after holding an intermediate post, took up the Judaeian governorship.

Before leaving Britain Vespasian may well have been responsible for one of the first Roman measures of economic development there. In the Mendip hills just north of Glastonbury the Britons turned out to be mining lead, after a desultory fashion. The mines were promptly expropriated, and assigned to the Second Legion for administration as a source of State revenue. Lead pigs discovered by archaeologists show that the Legion

was still exporting lead via Southampton in Nero's time, when Vespasian was in Judaea. Now Vespasian seems to have been a good business man, likely to find friends among the mercantile set and encourage them to come to him for advice. He was also interested in Eastern religion. To novelists, if nobody else, I offer the following little fantasy.

One evening the Governor of Judaea gave a reception at Jerusalem for important provincials. Wandering from group to group, he noticed half a dozen merchants talking more seriously and vehemently than is usual on such occasions. Stray sentences which he caught arrested his attention: something about prophecies and the Jewish Messiah. He strolled over and joined in the conversation, showing enough sympathy and comprehension to avert a change of subject. The merchants were all slightly known to him, and all but one were orthodox Jews. The other, however, spoke in a most peculiar way, giving his nation's prophecies an entirely different application. It transpired that he belonged to the "Christian" sect. Vespasian listened to his opinions, and thought him puzzling but impressive, the sort of person he would respect and remember. Dinner interrupted the argument. During the meal Vespasian spoke of the great opportunities in Britain for enterprising citizens. He had just received a letter from one of his old comrades in the Second Legion, stationed in Somerset. The Mendip mines were flourishing, slaves were plentiful, and the Legion could use more contractors to transport and market the lead. As he talked, he saw the "Christian" listening a few places off. The next day the man presented himself at Vespasian's residence. He was thinking of going over to Britain, to try his luck in a fresh field. Could the Governor oblige him with an introduction to the commander of the Second Legion . . . ?

NOTE

All bibliographies are selective; one is simply conscious of certain books as more obviously important than others. For the early British background I have used R. G. Collingwood and J. Myres, *Roman Britain and the English Settlements*. Sir John Rhys' collection *Studies in the Arthurian Legend* contains an interesting chapter on the Glastonbury-Avalon identification which is not so hopelessly outmoded as the rest of the work. Robert Jaffray's *King Arthur and the Holy Grail* is a summary

of the literary matter. The classic anthropological statement of the Grail mystique is Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*. A. E. Waite, in *The Hidden Church of the Holy Grail*, brings together a mass of data on the theory of an esoteric ecclesiastical body. Waite, I gather, was a kind of theosophist, but Jessie Weston thought highly enough of his scholarship to draw upon it. *Glastonbury the Mother of Saints*, by L. S. Lewis, is a most uncritical compilation of legends, from which a few key references and quotations are worth disinterring. There are some good pages on the "Matter of Britain," Courtly Love, and the peculiar Angevin atmosphere, in *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings*, by Amy Kelly.

THE PRINCE IMPERIAL

1856—1879

By

ALBAN LÉOTAUD

WHEN HIS FATHER, Napoleon III, died in exile at Chislehurst two years after the fall of the Second Empire, the Prince Imperial inherited the claim to the Napoleonic crown, and his chances of succeeding to the throne were increased a hundredfold when the Comte de Chambord, the last of the Bourbons, retired from the contest clinging to his white flag. Only the Republicans now stood in the way, and there seemed a very good chance of another successful Brumaire or a return from Elba, if only the Prince were adventurous enough to take the risk. A *coup* of this sort was actually planned by some members of his Party, to take place during the Paris Exhibition of 1878, and a delegation was sent to Chislehurst to persuade the Prince to come. The young Napoleon received them courteously and listened, but with a wave of the hand he brushed away their hare-brained schemes. "Let us be serious," he said, "and ask ourselves what will happen if I do go. I put up at an hotel; there is a demonstration

under my windows. A few poor devils are run in for shouting 'Long live the Emperor.' First thing in the morning, a commissioner of police and two plain-clothes men arrive to conduct me to the frontier. . . . No, gentlemen, I shall return to France, you may be sure, when the hour comes; but it is I who shall choose the hour." He never succeeded to the throne of his great-uncle, England's inveterate enemy, but remained in exile and gave his life fighting for England in 1879, in one of her colonial wars, in the flower of his early manhood. The figure of so gallant a Prince deserves a salute on the hundredth anniversary of his birth.

Napoleon-Louis Bonaparte, Prince Imperial, was born in Paris on Palm Sunday 1856. "Is it a boy?" asked the Empress, who had suffered a difficult parturition. "No," said Napoleon III, anxious not to excite her. "Is it a girl?" "No," for it certainly was not. "Then what is it?" cried the mother, more anxious than ever. Later on, however, there was no doubt about it, when the guns of the Invalides thundered their roar of welcome, and the news was flashed across the world that France had an heir to the throne. Congratulations were cabled back from every Court in Europe, and in a short time the baby had received twenty-eight Orders from various Sovereigns, as well as a benediction flashed from Pio Nono, who consented to be his godfather. A hundred thousand francs were scattered to the poor, a general amnesty released thousands of prisoners, three Marshal's batons were tossed to the Army, and the happy parents offered themselves as sponsors to all French children born on the same day. And even that was not all, for the Emperor pinned the grand cross of the Legion of Honour to the baby's cradle, and gave it the title of *Enfant de France*, which made the Royalists indignant, while his cousin, "Plon-Plon" Bonaparte, was furious at being jostled from his position as heir to the throne by an ugly little baby, and could hardly be induced to sign the birth certificate. (It was not the first time that the Prince Imperial was to brush his cousin aside from the sweet scent of the violets and the honey of the imperial bees, for twenty-three years later he was to cut him out of his will.) However, except for this little show of bad temper, all was perfect bliss, and a court priest that Palm Sunday morning preached on the text: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," which gave him an opportunity of singing his Hosannahs round the new cradle, and the Emperor, in a frenzy of delight,

embraced everyone he met in the palace, mercilessly stabbing them with his moustaches and bristling imperial.

Three months later, Mérimée wrote to the Prince's grandmother in Spain, a frivolous account of the baptism. Yes, it was a grand show and Notre-Dame was magnificently decorated from floor to ceiling, not least by the ladies in splendid attire with their diamonds sparkling in the candlelight against the sombre darkness of the old cathedral. In the midst of all stood the beautiful Empress in a blue robe, three or four acres in width, and a diadem of diamonds worth two kingdoms. The Emperor was in great form, and when after the ceremony he took the little brat in his arms and presented him to the crowd, there was a moment of enthusiasm. Queen Christine (of Spain), whose hundred and fifty kilogrammes were protected on either side by Chasseron and the Duke of Rianzarès, felt a little suffocated and the Spanish Ambassador had to hurry her out. The Archbishop started a Latin discourse, but his eloquence was cut short by the flourish of music and the roar of cannon. However, it was all a great success, and no Dauphin, King of Rome, or Comte de Paris had ever been so welcomed among the French people, as this latest sprig of the Bonapartes.

Soon, very soon indeed, they started his education, and long before he was taught how to sit on a throne, he was being taught how to sit on a horse—after all, was he not a Napoleon? At six months old he was strapped in a saddle, and at seven months he was entered on the roll of the grenadiers. He could hardly stand before he was dressed in their uniform, and a bearskin balanced on his small head. At reviews, as soon as he could, he rode a pony at his father's side, and when he was six he was given a fully grown horse. Indoors, he was surrounded by relics of Napoleon, and drank in the history of the Napoleonic era from his tutors, and out of class he listened with bright eyes to an old veteran's stories of campaigns, cavalry charges, and epic feats of arms. Is it surprising that after all that, when he came of age he should want to plunge into battle himself? But he was a delicate child, and more than once caused anxiety. There was that slightly ridiculous scene at luncheon in the Tuileries on the day of the opening of Parliament in 1867. The Emperor and Empress were in state robes, and the Prince in a black velvet suit, red silk stockings, and the Legion of Honour covering his breast. During the repast, the boy turned

deadly pale, and abruptly left the room. His tutor went in pursuit and tracked him down in the Emperor's study, where he lay in a faint. There followed a hue and cry in the palace. The doctor, Baron Corvisart, was fetched, and Napoleon and Eugénie gathered round, the latter holding a porcelain basin decorated with golden eagles crowned. Miss Shaw, the English governess, fluttered in, in a panic, and accused the doctor of exciting the children at their games. The Emperor turned on Corvisart and began to upbraid him. The Empress, forgetting herself, told the Emperor not to be a fool and not to lose his temper, and to find out first whether Shaw was right. In the midst of all this harmless summer lightning, the Prince quietly bent his head over the porcelain basin and was sick among the crowns and golden eagles. This was the signal for a general amnesty, and sharp words turned to honeyed courtesy. The pale cheeks were sponged, the Fontleroy suit brushed, the Legion of Honour smoothed into position, and the heir to the dynasty was once again fit to be shown to the adoring people.

His literary education was not neglected. After a few false starts, a good tutor was found for him, and remained with him till almost the end of his life. But he found the Prince not only unprecocious, but definitely backward and uninterested in letters. He seemed to prefer drawing, acting, riding and hunting, to the latent beauties in Ovid and Caesar's Gallic War. Talk to him of the classics of antiquity, and "his blue eyes became vague and lustreless with that distressed look which comes from non-comprehension." But put a blank piece of paper in front of him, and his pencil would soon fill it with the cleverest drawings, "beginning with a shoe, a fan, a bayonet, a dog's tail, he would complete a picture with clear, certain and unbroken lines that knew exactly where they were going." His religious instruction was also carefully watched, but here again he showed no outward signs of any warmth or emotion. This was remarked upon on the day of his First Communion, which he made on 8 May, 1868. The chapel in the Tuileries was hung with crimson velvet and gold fringe, and the whole imperial household was present at the Mass. A Prince and a General held the ends of the communion cloth, and the Archbishop of Paris (Darboy) preached in words of great gentleness clouded with sombre foreboding: "Your youth touches me, your future fills me with concern; beyond the peace

and felicity of your early years that now unfold tranquilly amid genius and courage, grace and kindness, your destiny appears to me with some of its storms and conflicts. The walls of this chapel recede . . .” Is it surprising that amid this chilly atmosphere, the Prince should have failed to show outward response to the sunnier side of religion? No, in his boyhood it appears that he knew no delights of religious fervour, but with the growth of his intellectual faculties, he learnt to love and cherish his faith, and came eventually to feel that without it he could never fulfil the mission and destiny which he believed to be his.

But if he was backward in his studies, it was not so in other things. As we have seen, he was a born artist and his horsemanship was always perfect. He was also a gifted actor, and figured with enormous success in some of Princess Metternich’s revues at Compiègne and Saint-Cloud. But this happy childhood did not last. He was fourteen at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, and though he went with his father to the front, he could not have been much more than a costly mascot. At the fall of Sedan, he escaped into Belgium with his equerries and made his way to the Coast and crossed the Channel in the *Comte de Flandres*, landing at Dover on 6 September. After a short rest, he went to join his mother at Hastings, where she had finally landed after a more adventurous escape from Paris. The Emperor had been taken prisoner by the Prussians and could not join his family in exile till the spring of 1871. Meanwhile, Eugénie had found a not too unsuitable house to live in at Chislehurst in Kent, and there the French exiles were to make their court for the next ten years. Walking up and down the gallery of Camden Place, and looking through the plate glass all along one side of it at the thick yellow fogs, it seemed to Eugénie that they were like so many fish in an aquarium. Their palaces had been swept away, and this is what they were now reduced to! We can understand why they found it *mortellement triste*, in spite of all the comings and goings of many of their friends, including Queen Victoria and Princess Beatrice, who met the Prince Imperial there for the first time.

In the autumn term of 1871, the Prince was entered as a student at King’s College, London, where he remained only for a very short time. That *milieu* of cockney boys did not at all suit him, and he was specially horrified at all the whistling that went on. “It’s

not a school," he said to his tutor, "it's a nest of blackbirds!" The next year, however, he entered Woolwich Military Academy, where he felt more at ease and soon became immensely popular among the cadets. It was these years at Woolwich which made him. He had come to England a delicate and backward boy, but during these years of adolescence, his tutors noted not only his growth in physical health, but a real flowering of his mental faculties.

Napoleon III died at Chislehurst at the beginning of the year 1873. The Prince was called out of the classroom and driven in a light carriage back to Camden Place. When he knelt at his father's death bed, he was still a boy, but when he rose, it was to the full stature of manhood. He was now not only *de jure* heir to the throne, but head of the still powerful French Imperial Party, and when on his sixteenth birthday he attained his majority, loyal Imperialists crossed the Channel in their thousands to fête him. Trains were running all morning on 16 March 1874, from Charing Cross and London Bridge to Chislehurst, and all the stations were decorated on the way. Chislehurst Common looked like a French village decked out for a feast-day. The English joined in with two bands, and the bells of the Anglican church added their music to the huge fun. A reporter in *The Times* next morning called him "Napoleon IV, holding in his hands the Second Empire, and only awaiting an opportunity to transform it into a Third."

He was popular not only among French Bonapartists, but came to be one of the best loved of public figures in England and even farther abroad. His romantic name, his good looks, his misfortunes, his vivacious nature, and not least the destiny which the future seemed to hold out to him, made him a popular figure in society, and adored by the public. Crowds gathered to see him wherever he was expected. On one occasion, as his train pulled in at a railway station, he stepped on to the platform unobserved from a third class carriage, and mingling with the crowd which had collected, he began to wave and cheer "like a cockney at a football match," and elbowed his way out to jump, still unrecognised, into his waiting landau. During his visit to Scandinavia in 1878, he was received as if his father were still on the throne. "I have everywhere been the object of a regular ovation," he wrote in flippant vein, "the authorities, public bands, ladies, bouquets—all in it!" He became a great favourite with Queen Victoria, and when he was

seen several times in the company of Princess Beatrice, the public, as is their wont, naïvely betrothed them.

He passed out brilliantly at Woolwich, with first prizes for riding and fencing. At a ball in the evening, the cadets lifted him shoulder-high, and cheered him hilariously. That was all very well, but now that his schooling was over, he had to ask himself the inevitable question: What now? He was on the threshold of manhood. The delicate child of the Tuileries had grown into a strong and healthy young man, serious when seriousness was required, but for the rest gay and debonair, often in tearing spirits. The backward student had given place to a keen and intelligent scholar with a romantic nature, disciplined by the flowering of his religious faith. He had, in fact, everything—but nowhere to put it, for he still lacked a throne. But he felt he must *do* something with his life. After all, he could not spend his time just idling at Chislehurst, collecting stamps, and visiting the country houses of the great. There was only one career for which he was educated—the career of a soldier. From his cradle he had been trained for this, and one cannot be surprised that soldiering had become almost a passion with him by this time. “France had need of a soldier and not of a frock coat,” he once said. And in 1878, he dropped these revealing words in a letter to his friend Captain Bigge (later Lord Stamfordham): “I am yearning to smell powder.” It was inevitable. The British military authorities allowed him to be attached to a battery in Aldershot, and the next war that came along, he volunteered. It was the Zulu war of 1879. “When one belongs to a race of soldiers,” he wrote again, “it is only with sword in hand that one gains recognition.” He thought this war came just at the right time for him as it involved no European complications, and in France there was no imminent political crisis to hold him back. “Everything therefore urged me to go, and I went . . .”

The news of his decision to fight with the British in Africa was received with mixed feelings everywhere. The Queen was sympathetic, but her Government, especially the War Office, was more than embarrassed. On the French side there was consternation. One left-wing paper published a caricature of the Prince, with the caption: “*Bébé s’en va-t-en guerre.*” The Empress was at first naturally opposed, but in the end she not only gave in, but even went to the War Office herself to speak in his favour. It was

the combined effort of Queen and Empress that obtained for him the desired permission to fight. This is what Disraeli meant when he said later: "My conscience is clear. I did all I could to stop him going. But what can you do when you have two obstinate women to deal with?" So there was a farewell dinner party at Camden Place, and after the departure of the guests, he went to his room and wrote his will, a touching document full of affection for his mother and his friends, his love of France, his gratitude to the Queen, and his deep religious faith. Then he lay down for a few hours' sleep, and early next morning he went to Mass and Communion with a friend in St. Mary's Church, where he lingered so long at his prayers that his mother had to send for him to come home for his breakfast. Very soon after, they left for Southampton. The Empress wrote to her old mother in Spain: "He says that he is now twenty-three, and that the reputation of his name will not allow him to sit idle, and that here is an opportunity for doing his duty which he does not want to miss." Bébé had gone to seek the bubble reputation.

We can trace the Prince's footsteps across Africa from the letters he wrote home at every stage. He was received at the Cape with enthusiasm. The houses were draped with flags, and the Governor's wife gave a dinner in his honour followed by a reception. Then again: "I was received on my arrival in Natal like a crowned head, though I wore a Lieutenant's uniform. The ships were dressed with flags and the military authorities came to meet me . . ." From Pietermaritzburg he wrote at the end of April: "It is not enough that I go, I must come back with honour. And for that I rely on God." He very soon reached the front line, and on 1 June, the day of the tragedy, he scribbled a note to his mother: "In a few minutes I am leaving to choose a camp for the 2nd Division on the left of the Blood River. The enemy is concentrating in force and there will certainly be an engagement . . ." There was, and sooner than he expected. The little detachment rode off early in the morning and chose their site for next day's camp. When their work was done, they dismounted in a deserted kraal, half surrounded by tall yellow grass, six feet high. The countryside looked peaceful and deserted, so they made coffee and relaxed. But from the tall grass, the Zulus were watching them. Suddenly there was an alarm and a volley of shots rang out. There was a general *saue qui peut*, as assegais flew through the air, and the

troopers got away as best they could, leaving two killed on the spot, and the Prince whose horse had panicked in the stampede and bolted before he could be mounted. He was left alone, and turned to face the enemy singlehanded. The dark bodies crept out of the high grass, all armed with rifles and assegais, and encircled the solitary figure. The Prince met them and there was a short struggle, in which, as they reported after, "he fought like a lion." He fell with many wounds on his body—all in front. "I have often seen his uniform," wrote the late Duke of Alba years after, "with sixteen huge assegai slashes in the chest—not one in the back."

The body was embalmed and made a slow procession back to England. The news of the tragedy did not reach home till more than a fortnight after. Queen Victoria was at Balmoral when the cable arrived, and she describes her feelings poignantly in her diary: "Dear Beatrice crying very much, as I did too . . ." The Empress was crushed with sorrow, and it was not till 25 June that she could write this pathetic note to her own mother: "Today I have strength enough to say only that I am still alive, as grief does not kill one." There was a state funeral at Chislehurst when the Prince's remains eventually arrived in July, and the Queen, who was there with her three sons and two daughters, describes it in minute detail in some of the most moving pages of her journal: "This is the end of all that was once so splendid and brilliant, and of one who promised to be a blessing not only to his country, but to the world. He wore truly 'the white flower of a blameless life'."

Never was any foreign Prince so universally mourned by the British public. There are five monuments erected to his memory: his tomb at Farnborough Abbey, a recumbent effigy in the church at Chislehurst and a cross on the Common, a statue at Sandhurst (recently removed from Woolwich) and the cenotaph in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Queen Victoria had wanted this cenotaph to be erected in Westminster Abbey, but the Government thought this was going a bit too far, and a motion against it was carried in Parliament. The Queen wrote an indignant letter to Gladstone, saying how shocked and disgusted she felt at the success of the motion, and at the lack of chivalry shown to the memory of the young Prince, "whose spotless character would have rendered a monument to him a proud and worthy addition to Westminster Abbey, which contains many of questionable merit." So with a

toss of the head, she gave instructions for it to be erected in St. George's, where it remains to this day one of the most impressive things there. It is in the form of a recumbent effigy, beautifully carved, and underneath in letters of stone, is inscribed the entire text of that deeply-moving prayer of his which was found after his death. The tomb at Farnborough is very austere in comparison, but by its side there still lies a wreath of artificial flowers placed there by Princess Beatrice so many years ago.

SOURCES: 1. *Lettres de P. Merimée à la comtesse de Montijo* and *Lettres Familiales de l'impératrice Eugénie*, published by the Duke of Alba. 2. *Memoirs of the Prince Imperial, and Recollections of the Empress Eugénie*, by A. Filon. 3. *The Prince Imperial*, by Katherine John. 4. *Life of the Empress Eugénie*, by R. Sencourt. 5. *Letters and Journal of Queen Victoria*. 6. *Fils d'Empereur*, by M. Quentin-Bauchart.

MARRIED PRIESTS OR MARRIED DEACONS

By

ROLAND HILL

ON 23 DECEMBER 1951 an ordination took place in the chapel of the Mary Ward nuns in Mainz which has had a sensational impact on the whole Catholic world. The newly ordained priest was Fr. Rudolf Goethe, a former Lutheran pastor who had been received into the Church in April 1950. He was married—his wife, formerly Countess Freda Bulow von Dennewitz, a descendant of Lutheran and Huguenot refugees, is also a convert—and he had received the Holy Father's special permission to be ordained and continue his married state. Two other married clergymen have since been ordained in Germany; they are Fr. Martin Giebner in the archdiocese of Paderborn and Fr. Otto Melchers in the diocese of Mainz.

It was stated at the time in many Catholic papers that the three priests in question had to give an undertaking to observe chastity of the unmarried in their married life or that they had to live as brother and sister. However, this was not the case. All three received permission from Rome to continue their married state without any reservation. This permission applied to their already existing valid marriages, just as it applies to the secular clergy in the Catholic Church of the Eastern rite, who are allowed to continue their married state, if the marriage has been concluded before their ordination to the diaconate, but who are not allowed to marry afterwards. A similar regulation was granted when the unification of the Ruthenians with the Roman Catholic Church was achieved at the end of the sixteenth century.

The celibacy of the clergy in the Western Catholic Church is a discipline adopted for various reasons, historical and social, and might well be rescinded if this was thought expedient. That this discipline has not, however, been affected, not even by implication, in the case of these former Lutheran pastors, was stated by the Bishop of Mainz who said in a sermon preached in his cathedral on Christmas Day 1951 that this was a purely personal decision of the Holy Father, and that there could be no question of a general extension of this privilege to Lutheran or other clergymen. "The decision is to be understood," he said, "out of our love for the Church which tells us that, when these men come to us, they should not be treated like Christians of the second rank or order, but should receive their full share. You see what a mother does to bring her children back to her."

It is not without significance that these ordinations have taken place in the dioceses of Paderborn and Mainz whose Archbishop and Bishop respectively are playing leading roles in ecumenical work. They are the leaders of a movement which is characterised by its individual members and small groups rather than by a visible large organisation, and has its origins in the days of common persecution under the Nazi régime. The aim of these men and women is simply to reach a better understanding between Catholics and Protestants in Germany, and already there are indications that these contacts among members of different faiths, carried out in no spirit of compromise, are having fruitful results in a lessening of tension, and often in practical co-operation in matters outside the dogmatic field. In an account of his con-

version which has just been published in Germany¹ Fr. Goethe can rightly say that, since the division of Christendom had started in Germany, that country ought also to give an impulse towards reunion; that it was from the Bishopric of Mainz that Tetzels issued his indulgence sermons which invoked Luther's protest, and that appropriately the call to reconciliation comes from that same bishopric of Mainz.

Both Mgr. Albert Stohr, the Bishop of Mainz, and Mgr. Lorenz Jaeger, Archbishop of Paderborn, appealed to the Holy Father on behalf of their three married converts and received his permission for their ordination despite strong opposition from the Catholic faithful, which has not abated since. It appears that the Holy Father granted this privilege willingly in order to remove what were mainly financial and economic obstacles in the way of the return to the Church of men who clearly had a vocation to the priesthood. The Holy Father had first been approached in this matter by the late Professor Wilhelm Schmidt, S.V.D., the well-known anthropologist, who was present at Fr. Goethe's ordination. The only restriction in the exercise of their priestly functions which it has been found necessary, out of regard for the Catholic faithful, to impose on the three convert-priests, is that they are not employed in ordinary parish work, but like religious, in the special care of souls. Fr. Goethe and his wife—they are childless—and Fr. Melchers and his family are now living in a house bought for them by Mgr. Stohr, where they give religious instructions and carry out other religious and ecumenical work. It has become a centre for contacts between Catholics and Protestants, and its name, *Domus Pacis*, suggests that it is not to serve as a propaganda centre or headquarters for the conversion of Protestants, but as a home devoted to peace among the Christian denominations. *Domus Pacis* is run on the lines of similar Catholic centres in the Netherlands, like *Una Sancta*, *Open Deur* and the houses of the *Women of Bethany*, all of which serve ecumenical aims, and, above all, hope to create an atmosphere of trust and charity in which Christians of different faiths can meet, confident that the power of the Holy Spirit will lead them to Truth. A similar centre now exists in Cologne under the auspices of the Dominican Fathers.

¹ *Bekentnis zur katholischen Kirche*. Edited by Karl Hardt, S.J., Echter Verlag, Würzburg.

The special circumstances of his ordination add to the interest of Fr. Goethe's contribution to the book *Bekenntnis zur Katholischen Kirche*. He played a prominent part in the Lutheran revival which began under the Nazi régime. At the time of his conversion he held a high position in the Hesse Ministry of Church Affairs. "I prayed and lived myself into the Catholic Church," he writes. The other three contributors also held important positions in the German Lutheran Church. Fr. Martin Giebner was consecrated bishop by the Lutheran theologian Professor Heiler, who himself had received consecration from the hands of three Gallican bishops. Giebner had maintained a "high-church" point of view until told by his own church authorities that he must choose between being a Lutheran and a believer in the apostolic succession, a sacramental and liturgical religion. Dr. Georg Klünder, a historian, was for eighteen years Evangelical pastor in a parish near Berlin, where he gradually came to find the marks of the Church, especially her divine dignity and universality, in the Catholic Church. Dr. Heinrich Schlier, who was Professor for New Testament Exegesis at Bonn University, found the Church in what he describes "a really Protestant fashion"—through his love for the Scriptures; his sister, a well-known writer, having preceded him on his spiritual journey.

What is particularly significant in the conversion of these four Protestant pastors is the evidence they provide of a new and solid, if as yet small, "high-church" tendency in German Lutheranism, a growing pre-occupation with the concept of the Church not merely as a congregation of believers but as a divinely appointed institution, the guardian of her sacramental system, an infallible teacher on faith and morals. Since the Hitlerite persecution of the Christian religion, more and more German Protestants have awakened to the fatal reality of their historical ties to the State and sought to recover the lost spiritual roots of their own Lutheran traditions. German Lutheran historians and theologians have rediscovered Luther as a man who was devoted to Our Lady and believed in the Natural Law, and, today, a theologian, like Probst Asmussen, can write about the Church and Our Lady in terms hardly differing from those a Catholic would use.

The strongest Protestant opposition which Hitler encountered,

came from the so-called "Confessional Church," and one of its leaders, Pastor Niemöller, was himself close to being received into the Catholic Church when a prisoner in a concentration camp, as we learn from this book. The growth of a "high church" Lutheran movement is a product of these years of persecution. But the need to bear witness, sometimes with their lives, to "confess" their faith, led many of these German Protestants, particularly younger clergymen, to ask themselves by what authority such witness was to be given, and what was the justification of their authority.

"Soon I found," writes Professor Schlier, whose "Short Account" is easily the most profound and illuminating of these conversion reports, "that we had replaced the dogmatic by the charismatic principle, and important though the latter is for the life of the Church, it is not her basis." The study of the New Testament then led him to ask himself whether the Lutheran faith, and especially its more modern Evangelical deviation, agreed with the witness of the Scriptures, and showed him gradually that the Church which they envisaged was the Catholic Church. And he found the key to this discovery in St. John's Gospel:

Because the Word became Flesh and not merely words, there is not just preaching but also the Sacrament; there is not just witness but also Dogma and sanctification and that transformation from glory to glory of which the Apostle St. Paul speaks. Because the Word became Flesh, there is not merely the fulfilment of our existence in faith, but ultimately the real "presence" of Christ in the Church, in her institutions, her laws and her liturgy, and not merely his fleeting translation from the Scriptures into the individual human soul.

The privilege of ordination which the Holy Father has granted to two of these Lutheran priests who are married (the third, Fr. Otto Melchers, has not written about his conversion) has raised hopes in Germany and elsewhere that it might be more widely extended. However, there is no reason to think that the Church intends to abolish or even to mitigate her time-honoured law of the celibacy of the clergy. The priestly office requires full devotion to Christ to "attend upon the Lord without distraction" (1 Cor. 7, 32) and it was a natural historical course which produced, in the times of persecution of the early Church, a

demand for bishops, as heads of the Christian communities, to be unencumbered by the care for wives and children, and to be wedded to Christ alone. As the monastic ideal became united with the ideal of the priesthood in the Western Church, the unwritten law of the general celibacy of the clergy became the written law.

What appears to be much more within the realm of realistic discussion is the revival of the old practice of ordaining married men to the diaconate as one major answer to the shortage of priests all over the world. The case for the married diaconate is scholarly argued by Dr. Wilhelm Schamoni in a brief study, the publication of which at this moment must be warmly welcomed.¹

The office of the diaconate—the first Deacons were the “seven men of honest report” assisting the Apostles (Acts 6, 1-7)—has become nowadays merely a transitional phase on the way to priesthood. The original tasks and services of deacons were summed up in the *schema* distributed to the Council Fathers in Trent on 6 July 1563:

The service of the deacons has to consist in a lasting endeavour within, and for the benefit of, the administration of the Church. It is their task to baptise and to preach according to the bishops' orders, also to re-admit to the Church those ex-communicated, in the absence of bishop or priest. They shall observe with care, and perform in piety, whatever concerns the bodily welfare of widows, wards and orphans, prisoners, sick persons and of all those who suffer from want, and in just the same manner, whatever is capable of furthering the faithful spiritually. For all these matters they must have a wide open heart and untiring care. For they have to embrace all the faithful with all their love, particularly those who are most in need of a Good Samaritan's help. . . .”

In the Western Church, the development of the celebration of the Eucharist into the private Mass rendered, as Dr. Schamoni shows, the deacon redundant at the altar. Social and economic changes also played their part. The transition at the beginning of the Middle Ages from an urban to an agrarian economy, and the assumption by the Church of the guardianship of law and order reduced the functions of *caritas* which were the deacon's special calling, and once there was an abundance of priests in the West,

¹ *Married Men as Ordained Deacons*, by Wilhelm Schamoni. Translated by Otto Eisner (Burns and Oates 7s 6d).

the deacon ceased to be their regular helper. He was the "precursor and pioneer" of the priest and acted as the leader of the young Christian rural communities all over Europe, later to be replaced by the priest.

But today, as in the old Church, there are not enough priests to cope with the expansion of the Church. Many parish communities are left without even the minimum of Sunday Mass. In France, for instance, there are 13,000 unoccupied parishes; in Central America there is only one priest for every 5,850 Catholics (in Guatamala for 25,500!), in South America for 4,900. And keeping to the South American examples, Dr. Schamoni asks,

rather than leave 144 million souls with only 10,000 priests, would it not be easier to find among groups of 1,440 believers, one resident with a genuinely spiritual mind, a man who has proved by the way he brings up his children and presides in his home that he could just as well preside in the House of God? Such a man whose character commands respect, need not necessarily have any special knowledge or undergo any special training; he could without any long preparation (for which he would anyway have little time because of his ordinary work), be ordained as deacon and thus become a column in the temple of God. He is a column already; it has only to be put up.

Such a deacon could hold a prayer and reading service on those Sundays when the Holy Eucharist was not celebrated; he could administer Holy Communion to the faithful in church and also in the sickroom. In outlying districts he could keep in touch with the congregation, and his family and occupation would link him to the place of his activity in a way which the busy modern parish priest can hardly equal. Eusebius tells the story how a sick priest could not come to a dying old man and sent Holy Communion to him through a young boy. "How many do nowadays die without a priest! For how many a deacon could be the bringer of salvation!" Dr. Schamoni also points to the possibility of ordaining to the diaconate students of theology who have found that they are more suited to marriage than to become priests, and to whom this apostolate may offer a chance of full religious integration.

The institution of married deacons might well contribute towards an increase in the numbers of students of theology. It would offer a solution to the many convert Protestant clergymen

who would be content with an ecclesiastical office that allows them to give soon after their reception into the Church service in the care of souls in a manner similar to that to which they have been accustomed. Some of them, if they are unmarried, may go on to become priests, but for all of them the diaconate could offer a life of full and complete devotion to Christ. In the mission field where the Church has come to rely increasingly on the work of the native catechists, the opening of the diaconate would lend their positions more authority and influence among their people. The latter would find it less difficult to adapt themselves towards the missionaries.

No doubt there are objections to these proposals, but the supreme law remains "the salvation of souls." That is the law which St. Cyril remembered when, 1100 years ago, he justified the introduction of Slavonic as a liturgical language in his mission to the Slavs: "Since I found them so very lacking in all knowledge of the ways of God and sunk in ignorance, the grace of the gently flowing Holy Spirit gave me only one thought. Thereby I have thus won a great people for God." And this supreme law was also remembered by St. Francis Xavier and the great Jesuit missionaries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their plans for native married catechists and a native clergy and the use of the vernacular as the language of the liturgy were unfortunately never realised, to the great detriment of the Church in the Far East. and, indeed, in other parts of the world. "Confidence, responsibility and zeal cannot unfold in people who are treated as inferiors," writes Dr. Schamoni. This is as true today for the whole apostolate of the Church as it was in former ages.

KING ALFRED AND THE CAKES

A Study in Historicity

THE STORY of King Alfred and the cakes is familiar from childhood days, but its provenance is not so well known. In this essay an attempt is made to trace the ancestry of the story which is not without interest.

The first printed version of the story appeared in 1574 when Archbishop Matthew Parker, that notable "improver" of texts, published

his edition of Asser's *De Rebus Gestis Aelfredi*. Asser, or Asserius Menevensis, was a learned monk of Pembrokeshire who was ultimately appointed Bishop of Sherborne and who was a close friend of Alfred; he wrote his *Life* of that king in 893, before the death of the king. Parker's edition of the *Life* was prepared from a manuscript which was destroyed in the fire at the Cottonian Library in 1731. The story, as it appears in Parker's edition, may be translated as follows:

And, as we read in the *Life* of St. Neot, he [*i.e.*, King Alfred] lay hidden with a certain cowherd. But it happened one day that a peasant woman, the wife of that cowherd, began to cook some loaves while the king, who was sitting near the hearth, attended to his bows and arrows and other warlike equipment. When the unfortunate woman saw that the loaves at the fire were burning, she ran quickly and removed them, and reviled the invincible king, saying: "Hi, there, man! You are slow to turn the loaves which you see burning, but you will be very pleased to eat them when they are done." The unlucky woman little thought that he was King Alfred who had fought so many battles against heathens and who had won so many victories over them.¹

Parker printed this passage as if it were part of Asser's text, but there is no doubt that it is an interpolation. Parker took the passage, and others, from *The Annals of St. Neots*, adding them to Asser's text without any indication that they were interpolations, apparently under the impression that the *Annals* embodied a fuller text of Asser's *Life* of Alfred.² The story thus appeared to have the full authority of Asser, Alfred's close friend; it is evident, however, that Asser has no responsibility for the story of the cakes and that we must look to the *Annals*.

The *Annals of St. Neots* is a form of chronicle compiled from many sources; it is not continued beyond the year 914 and it is evidently incomplete.³ The compiler, who was little more than a copyist, has

¹ Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, ed. Stevenson (1904), p. 41. The translation is mine; the Latin text is as follows: *Et, ut in vita Sancti Neotis patris legitur, diu latebat apud quendam suum vaccarium. Contigit autem die quodam, ut rustica, uxor videlicet illius vaccarii, pararet ad coquendum panes, et ille rex sedens sic circa focum praeparavit sibi arcum et sagittas et alia bellorum instrumenta. Cum vero panes ad ignem positos arduentes aspexit illa infelix mulier, festinanter cucurrit et amovit eos, increpans regem invictissimum, et dicens: "Heus homo*

*urere, quos cernis, panes gyrare moraris,
cum nimium gaudes hos manducare calentes!"*

Mulier illa infausta minime putabat illum esse regem Aelfredum, qui tot bella gessit contra paganos, tantasque victorias accepit de eis.

² Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. XIX.

³ The *Annals of St. Neots* are printed in Stevenson's edition of Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, with valuable notes; the story of the cakes is on p. 136.

embodied extracts from Abbo's *Passio Sancti Edmundi*, the Frankish Annals, the Norman Annals, Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Asser's *Life of Alfred* (most of which is transcribed), a *Life of St. Aethelberht*, king of East Anglia, and a *Life of St. Neot*. Apart from the long extract from the *Life of St. Neot*, there is little to connect the *Annals* with the Priory of St. Neots in Huntingdonshire, beyond the fact that Leland found a copy in that priory and called it *Chronicon Fani Sancti Neoti*. Nothing is known of the date of its compilation, but since the compiler used Norman sources it must be later in date than the Norman conquest, and is probably later than 1104, the date of the compilation of Hariulf's *Chronicon Centulense* whence the compiler, in all probability derived his account of the vision of Charles III (the Fat).

It will have been noticed, from the extract quoted at the beginning of this essay, that the compiler of the *Annals* expressly states that he took his story of the cakes from the *Life of St. Neot*. This *Life* is not extant, but it is evident that the compiler of the *Annals* followed his usual custom and transcribed the extracts which he borrowed and did not merely give their tenor in his own words.¹ There the words with which the peasant woman rebuked the king appear as verses, and these verses also occur in a *Life of St. Neot* in an early twelfth-century collection of saints' lives in the Bodleian Library.² In the Bodleian *Life* the story is told differently but the verses are introduced, as in the *Annals*, by the exclamation *Heus homo!* There is another *Life of St. Neot*³ in a twelfth-century transcript which formerly belonged to the monastery of Bec-Hellouin in Normandy, of which St. Neots was then a dependency.⁴ This *Life* is obviously an expanded version of that in the Bodleian MS, but the story of the cakes is told in different words; the cowherd has become a swineherd (*subulcus*) and the verses have disappeared.

It seems clear, then, that the story of Alfred and the cakes comes from the *Life of St. Neot*. The version of the *Life* used by the compiler of the *Annals* cannot, in view of the date of the *Annals*, be much later than the end of the eleventh century. It agrees closely, so far as can be judged from the portions reproduced in the *Annals*, with the *Lives* still in existence. All of these extant *Lives* describe St. Neot as a kinsman of Alfred and picture the king as given to tyrannical courses in the

¹ Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

² Bodleian MS. 535, fo. 44 verso.

³ Printed by Mabillon (*Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, sect. iv, part 2, p. 324) and, more fully, by the Bollandists (*Acta Sanctorum*, Julii, tom. vii, p. 319). There is a thirteenth-century copy of this *Life* in the British Museum (B.M., Cottonian MS, Claudius, Av).

⁴ Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 76.

early part of his reign, for which he was reproved by the saint; his misfortunes are connected with a prophecy made by the saint and an account is given of the saint's appearance to the king in a vision when he promised that he would lead the royal army to victory.

Save for the relationship of the saint to the king, all these particulars appear in an Old English homily on St. Neot.¹ In this homily, however, the story of the cakes assumes a different form. In this version the king sought refuge with a swineherd at Athelney. The bad-tempered wife of the herd ordered him to turn the loaves (she said that she had noticed that he was a great eater) and the king meekly obeyed; there is no mention of the loaves being burned. The assertion that St. Neot was related to the king, and the developed treatment of the story of the cakes, found in the later, Latin, *Lives*, seem to be due to a literary manipulation of the simpler details appearing in the Old English homily with the object of increasing their dramatic effect, so that it seems reasonable to conclude that the homily was derived from an earlier version of the *Life* than that which was used by the compiler of the *Annals*, and that in the homily we have the story of the cakes in an earlier form.

The determination of the date when the original *Life* of St. Neot was composed presents some difficulties. It is obvious that it must have been written before the compilation of the *Annals* in the early part of the twelfth century, and a clue to a more exact date is provided by a curious feature which is to be found in all versions of the *Life*, and was presumably to be found in the original *Life*. We are told that St. Neot died before 878 and that he had been ordained at Glastonbury by Aelfheah who subsequently became Bishop of Winchester. There were two bishops of Winchester of that name, Aelfheah the Bald whose episcopate extended from 934 to 951, and St. Aelfheah who was bishop of Winchester from 984 to 1005 when he was translated to Canterbury. If, as the *Lives* and the homily state, St. Neot died before 878, he could not have been ordained by either of these bishops. It seems unlikely that this curious blunder could have been made in the same century in which both bishops lived, and it would appear probable that it was made not earlier than the middle of the eleventh century. It seems, therefore, that the original *Life* of St. Neot was composed sometime between the middle of the eleventh and the early part of the twelfth century.

This conclusion, however, is rendered suspect by a passage in the text of Asser's *De Rebus Gestis Aelfredi* where it is related that the king went to pray at a chapel in Cornwall in which the body of St. Gueriir

¹ B.M., Cottonian MS, Vespasian D xiv, fo. 145 verso; printed by Wülcher (*Anglia*, iii, p. 104). This is a twelfth-century copy of a collection of homilies most of which are known in older texts (see *Academy*, 22 Feb., 1890, p. 134).

was buried; the text then continues: "and now St. Neot also rests there."¹ These words, which fit very awkwardly into their context, are almost certainly an interpolation, and must have been added sometime between 893, when Asser wrote his work, and about 1000 which is the approximate date of the manuscript used by Parker in which they appeared. The body of St. Neot, however, was transferred from Cornwall to Huntingdonshire sometime before 1020. All this suggests that St. Neot died in the latter part of the tenth century.² If this date is accepted it would harmonise with the statement in the *Lives* that St. Neot was ordained by Bishop Aelfheah of Winchester, but it would invalidate the conclusion reached in the preceding paragraph. Moreover, with such a date for the death of St. Neot, one is confronted with the difficulty of accounting for the story of the saint's appearance to the king in a vision, which is mentioned in all the *Lives*, since it is difficult to understand how a man who did not die until the end of the tenth century could have appeared after death to the king, who died at the end of the ninth century. It is possible, however, that the story has been transferred from one saint to another. There is a story of King Alfred, which was current at least as early as the eleventh century, to the effect that when he was fleeing from the Danes he had a vision in which he saw St. Cuthbert who promised him help against his enemies.³ The great similarity suggests that the story may have been transferred to St. Neot. It would not have been possible to make the substitution without fear of detection until some time after the death of St. Neot, and, if this is what happened, it seems likely that it was done some time after the translation of the relics of the saint.

The story of King Alfred and the Cakes can thus be traced to the original *Life* of St. Neot which was probably composed about the beginning of the twelfth century, and may have been composed earlier; it is, however, impossible to trace it to sources contemporary

¹ Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, ed. Stevenson (1904), p. 55 (the words of the interpolation here quoted are, "et nunc etiam Sanctus Niot ibidem pausat"); see *ibid.*, p. xlix.

² Cf. Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

³ For the earliest version of this story see *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, §§. 15 and 16 (printed in *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, ed. T. Arnold, Rolls Series, London, 1882, i, 204, 205); the story also appears in *Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesiae*, cap. x (printed, *op. cit.*, i, 62), in the *Capitula de Miraculis et Translationibus*, cap. i (printed, *op. cit.*, i, 231, 232), and in Simeon of Durham's (attributed) *Historia Regum*, §. 76 (printed, *op. cit.*, ii, 83), and elsewhere. See also William of Malmesbury's *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series, 1887, i, 125. Simeon of Durham records that Alfred, who had a great devotion to St. Cuthbert, admonished his son Edward, who succeeded him, that he should especially honour the saint (*Historia Regum*, sub an. 899, printed in *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, ii, 92; *English Hist. Docs.*, i, 251, translation).

with the king. Nevertheless, there is no reason to suppose that the story was invented by the compiler of the *Life* of St. Neot, for, judging by the *Lives* which have survived, he had no other anecdote which is so simple and so devoid of the miraculous. There were many traditions concerning the early kings still current in the twelfth century, as may be seen from William of Malmesbury's *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*. In all probability the story derived from a tradition current before the composition of the original *Life* of St. Neot and its obvious purpose was to show the depths to which the king had been reduced in his adversity. In the words of W. H. Stevenson, "it is conceivable that, in the form it appears under in the O. E. homily, it is a tradition concerning Alfred that the author of the *Life* of St. Neot dragged into his compilation when wearied of filling up the gaps of his hero's life from his imagination."¹

It is impossible to prove or disprove the truth of the story but, in its general form, it is not inherently improbable. It is unlikely, it is true, that Alfred fled alone from the Danes, but it is not impossible that he spent one or two nights, unaccompanied, in a peasant's hut. Moreover, in the absence of widely distributed pictures of the king, it is unreasonable to expect that the peasant should have recognised his visitor who arrived in a rather sorry plight. But, perhaps, in view of the version of the story found in the Old English homily, we are entitled to doubt that King Alfred actually burned the cakes, which were, in any case, loaves of bread.

GEOFFREY DE C. PARMITER

MOZART ANNIVERSARY BOOKS²

THE two-hundredth anniversary of Mozart's birth, on 27 January this year, was celebrated with great energy by musicians, musicologists and publishers. Such anniversary celebrations, which seem to be increasing in both popularity and scope, are often of more than pious interest. They may bring into clearer focus a less familiar composer or even, by performances of works less frequently heard in the general

¹ Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

² *Mozart in Retrospect: Studies in Criticism and Bibliography* by A. Hyatt King (Oxford University Press 30s).

Opera Annual 1955-6, edited by Harold Rosenthal (John Calder 21s).

Mozart's Letters (selected from the translations of Emily Anderson), edited and introduced by Eric Blom (Penguin Books 3s 6d).

A Mozart Pilgrimage, by Nerina Medici and Rosemary Hughes (Novello 30s).

repertoire (and how many composers are known by a mere handful of their works!) the rarer but more illustrious figures such as Mozart himself. The debit side, the opportunist commercialisation, is of no great importance: the credit, the opportunity to re-assess a composer in his work and life as a whole, is of real value.

It may be that in this particular celebration the actual performances of music have exceeded in importance the various literary contributions which have been made to our knowledge and understanding of Mozart. Few would regret this balance if it were necessary to choose between the two, but in fact musicology, biography, bibliography and performance are not separate entities, and it is therefore a matter for regret that 1956 has not seen anything to compare with the appearance in 1856 of the first volume of Otto Jahn's monumental *W. A. Mozart*. For, as Mr. Hyatt King has demonstrated with scholarly expertise, it is by no means the case that nothing more remains to be said. In one of the most stimulating essays in his book he concludes, "The considerable amount of fresh material which has accumulated since the end of the First World War shows clearly that a new definitive biography of Mozart is badly needed." The ensuing shrewd analysis which he gives of what such a work would entail will deter all but a colossus, but it shows clearly our present deficiency. Meanwhile, however, the most substantial fare which the anniversary has produced is this same collection of essays, some entirely new (including the one which gives the book its title, an admirable account of Mozart appreciation and research, and complementary studies of "Köchel," "Breitkopf, and the Complete Edition" and "Jahn and the Future of Mozart Biography"), some revised or expanded versions of contributions to periodicals.

Of more ephemeral interest are the articles in the *Opera Annual* for 1955-6, a handsomely produced and illustrated volume, the second of its series, which has been largely devoted to Mozart. There are many contributions by illustrious conductors and singers, and if many of these are rather naïve reminiscences of the "how good I was in . . ." type, there are honourable exceptions, notably one of the greatest of the singers, Julius Patzak, who has some instructive recollections of Richard Strauss's productions of Mozart. Mention should be made, too, of an informed and witty article by Professor E. J. Dent (and to whom is our generation of Mozart opera-lovers more indebted?) on "The Modern Cult of Mozart."

In a sense the book most to be welcomed is the Pelican edition of selections from Emily Anderson's felicitous translations of the composer's letters, since this inexpensive little volume will surely give a wider audience than could otherwise have been reached a direct insight into Mozart as a personality and an artist. These invaluable documents show in almost every page two of the essentials of a good

letter-writer: spontaneity and candour. No less revealing, perhaps, are the rare occasions when the spontaneity seems a little artificial, the candour somewhat calculated. There are so many passages one longs to quote in full, but space permits of references to only two groups of letters. The first consists of two written to his father in 1781 at the time of the composition of *Die Entführung*, for they give a very clear idea of the way (and how matter-of-fact and practical it seems!) in which Mozart composed an opera. The second is the moving series of begging letters he wrote towards the end of his life, anxious for his wife's health, his own gradually failing. Perhaps it is not till then, in spite of the pathetic and human attempts to save his dignity, that one realises his full stature as a man, rigid and uncompromising in his devotion to his musical ideals. And the pathos of this sad coda to his too-short life is emphasised by its contrast to the universal acclaim with which he is now celebrated.

It was, indeed, only within a few years of his death that Mozart began to be generally recognised as one of the greatest of composers. There was no long period of neglect, as in the case of J.S. Bach. By the summer of 1829 the cult had become widespread and, at least in places, intense, as can be seen from the almost amusing reverence and awe with which Vincent Novello (the founder of the famous firm of music publishers) and his wife Mary went to Salzburg. The object of their mission was to present a sum of money subscribed by music-lovers in London to the aged and impoverished sister of the composer, Marianne, and to collect materials for a projected biography. They both kept a record of their travels, and their note-books, forgotten for years until unearthed during the last War, are now seasonably re-printed, having been transcribed by a direct descendant, Nerina Medici di Marignano, and edited and correlated in a most scholarly and comprehensive manner by Rosemary Hughes.

The result, however, is in many ways disappointing. First of all, in summer—out of season—the Novellos were travelling at the wrong time of year to hear anything of much interest in the opera-house or concert-hall. Apart from a few routine performances of opera and band concerts in the parks and squares ("trumpet waltzes, commonplace trifles, country Dances—and paltry jigs in 6/8 time"), they heard little but church music. Here they were indefatigable, but largely unrewarded: perfunctory, careless performances, bad organs and worse organists, very little by "Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Cherubini, Hummel or other of the most elevated Class of Composers." Nor were their travels sufficiently wide-ranging to give an accurate impression of continental musical life as a whole.

And their enquiries about Mozart himself? Of their four contacts Marianne was blind, aged, partly paralysed, her voice "nearly extinct,"

within months of her death—a venerable relic rather than a productive source of information. Constanze, the composer's widow (who had married and been widowed again), was much more communicative, but well aware of the glory she reflected as the widow of an acknowledged genius, only too willing to edit her husband's character for posterity and clearly unreliable. Then there was Mozart's second son—who was about five months old when his father died!—and finally the Abbé Stadler. Here, surely, was a most promising witness, for the distinguished and octogenarian Benedictine was himself an excellent and experienced musician, and had been a close friend of Mozart. But Vincent does not appear to have fed him with any very searching questions or to have elicited much more than pleasant anecdotes. Far, then, from adding to our knowledge of Mozart, the Novellos' diaries have often to stand corrected by modern scholarship—represented by Miss Hughes.

The nicest thing about this book—and how it would have surprised them!—is the light it throws on Vincent and Mary: kindly, educated, tolerant and modest people; friends of Mendelssohn, Paganini, Liszt, Shelley, Leigh Hunt, Charles Lamb; the parents of that great singer Clara Novello. And Vincent himself who was complaining—in the 1820s!—that continental organists were not playing Bach; who published pioneer editions of Purcell's *Sacred Works*, Boyce's *Cathedral Music* and selections from the Fitzwilliam Museum manuscripts; who "as organist and choirmaster to the Portuguese Embassy had made South Street a magnet to music-loving Londoners;" whose cheap editions of classical works gradually transformed the English musical scene,—will not Miss Hughes now give us a book about *him*? For he pioneered for Mozart in this country long before the great anniversaries, and in celebrating Mozart we pay tribute to him also.

ERIC TAYLOR

REVIEWS

TRUTH IS EDIFICATION

Two Portraits of St. Teresa of Lisieux, by Etienne Robo (Sands 9s 6d).

CLIENTS OF ST. THÉRÈSE who identify sanctity with faultlessness will dislike Fr. Robo's presentation of the saint and regard him as a debunker no better than a Lytton Strachey. Those who understand that holiness is a persistent heroic surrender of man's will to God's, will, as the author hopes, discover St. Thérèse as she really was making not only external trials, obstacles and sufferings but the interior obstacles and sufferings of personal temperament and initial defect the material

of a progressive sanctification, a saint, more credible, more human, more imitable, more encouraging and, in the true sense of that tarnished term, more edifying than the impossible stained-glass figure which for so long the Lisieux Carmel and her three sisters in particular have imposed on the Catholic world. Until the overdue photostat of her *Vie d'une Ame* has been published and we are able to distinguish with certainty what the saint herself wrote from suppressions or embellishments by her sister Pauline, a definitive biography is impossible. Fr. Robo, however, even from existing material proves that the saint by nature was proud and self-willed and from childhood a pronounced neuropath. Her frequent melancholia and outbursts of tears, indulged for their own sake, particularly when the advice of a relative or a decision of a Superior crossed her will, even Pope Leo's refusal to authorise her entrance into Carmel before the date fixed by the local Superiors, were undoubtedly neurotic. Margery Kempe is often dismissed with short shrift for her outbursts of weeping. They, no doubt, like Thérèse's were neurotic. But unlike Thérèse's they were produced by the contemplation of Our Lord's sufferings, not her own. In the event these tears were overcome, though during the weakness of the final illness Thérèse wept with self-sympathy as she read her own account of her past life. Neurotic also were her scruples and the hypersensitiveness which made pinpricks painful wounds.

Though we cannot yet determine Pauline's share in the autobiography, Fr. Robo is able to prove that she added to the account of her sister's death, a victim's to the last breath nailed to the cross not only of physical but mental agony, an imaginary final rapture as she beheld the beauty of her God coming to receive her. Even a chorus of song-birds, in one account a dove, is introduced to adorn her deathbed. How much more impressive the stark truth.

Moreover Fr. Robo has literally shown by reproducing an untouched photograph of Thérèse as a novice that the photographs released and circulated by Carmel are fakes. How the photograph reproduced was preserved in spite of efforts by the nuns with the bishop's assistance to get possession of it and destroy it, and the inconsistent excuses put forward to discredit it, are too long a story to be told here. On the evidence produced by Fr. Robo it is difficult to acquit the nuns and especially the saint's sisters of resisting the known truth, and deliberately deceiving the public.

In regard to the final illness the author discusses three problems. Why, he asks, did the Prioress Marie de Gonzague delay a year after the first haemorrhages from the lung before giving Thérèse the necessary medical treatment, allowing her meanwhile to share the normal work and prayer of the Community? He cannot make up his mind. My personal belief is that the Prioress, though extremely

unbalanced, must be acquitted of any hostile motive. The same determination, I suspect, which enabled Thérèse to overcome the bishop's refusal to advance the normal date of entrance into Carmel, because it was, she was convinced, God's will enabled her to convince her Prioress of what was her own mistaken belief that it was God's will that she should live the normal Carmelite life until she died. I agree with Fr. Robo's answer to the second question, whether she succumbed to the persistent temptation to doubt, a certain negative. Her will, in fact her central being, held fast to a faith which appeared not only to her emotions and imagination, but even to her intelligence, incredible. The third problem he finds somewhat baffling: how could Thérèse on her deathbed express assurance not only of her sanctity but of its future recognition by the Church, the more so because, as he shows, it seems to be contradicted by utterances of a humbler tone? My solution is that, granted the authenticity of the entire account, these claims to sanctity were irrepressible intuitions of truth infused by the Holy Spirit, as also, I suggest, was the determination to enter Carmel prematurely. It is, I think, a defect of Fr. Robo's book that he appears to make little account of the divine guidance promised to all Christians and to be expected particularly in the life of a saint. If I am right in this the pride which was undoubtedly part of Thérèse's natural character, and on which Mother de Gonzague remarked, was shown not so much by her insistence on an early entrance as in her amazing statement, "a greater knowledge of perfection" than she possessed at the age of fourteen was impossible, for she understood "the secret of perfection" which lifelong scholars could not discover.

On several occasions St. Thérèse informs us the weather showed sympathy with her emotions, raining in harmony with her tears and fine and sunny when she was happy. This, comments Fr. Robo, is incredible. In fact it must, he says, have been the other way round. Her sensitivity made her melancholy when it rained, happy in bright sunshine. His explanation does not fit the facts. For, as he tells us, her tears were often produced by disappointments with which the weather had nothing to do. In particular, when her disappointment at the papal audience plunged her in "crushing" sorrow, it rained in torrents. A series of coincidences, the honest illusion of an imaginative temperament—Fr. Robo gives many instances where her account misrepresents the past? We cannot tell.

I cannot agree with Fr. Robo that knowledge of what is passing in another person's mind, if not divine illumination must be due to unconscious observation of external signs. There is excellent evidence for natural telepathy, particularly with the transparent, mediumistic temperament commonly associated with sanctity.

Nor can I agree in principle with his objection to particular friend-

ships; that strong human affections are incompatible with wholehearted love of God. In St. Thérèse this may well have been the case. Fr. Robo in fact produces evidence that it was. But, as he himself points out, it amounted to a streak of unattractive ruthlessness. And it was certainly not the case with St. Teresa of Avila or St. Francis de Sales.

St. Thérèse was, Fr. Robo observes, allergic to St. Francis' spirituality. This surprises me. For the substance of her Little Way is taught already in his *Devout Life* and *Love of God*. Salesian spirituality, that is to say, is the Little Way dressed in the costume of the seventeenth century; Thérèse's the same Little Way dressed in the costume of the nineteenth. A comparative study of Salesian and Theresian spirituality would be rewarding.

I agree with Fr. Robo in refusing to attach the importance attached by Fr. Urs von Balthasar—not Hans and no longer a member of the Society of Jesus—to Père Pichon's declaration that his penitent never committed mortal sin. An admirable cure for scruples, it did not amount to a declaration of holiness. Since mortal sin is the deliberate rejection of what is known or believed to be God's will in a grave matter, enormous numbers of devout conscientious Christians never, I am convinced, commit it, though they are by no means saints and guilty of much venial sin.

One final criticism. Fr. Robo throughout seems to underestimate the intelligence of women as compared with men. The somewhat contemptuous tone of his final remark may well prevent many women readers from appreciating as we all should the shrewd wisdom and spiritual common sense of his treatment.

E. I. WATKIN

THE VATICAN IN WORLD WAR II

Le Vatican et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, by Paul Duclos (Editions A. Pedone 1200 frcs).

THIS BOOK is not a chronological survey of the policy of the Holy See in the Second World War, though it provides abundant material for consultation by future historians. It is a series of detached studies of almost every aspect of that policy, including not only Pius XII's attempts to impede the outbreak of war but also his pronouncements on the lines to be traced if it was to be followed by a wise ordering of an international society. Dr. Duclos has absorbed the contents of scores of articles in the periodical press in the preparation of his work. His method, however, has one disadvantage. It does not enable the reader to distinguish clearly that process of evolution in the phases of Vatican policy which undoubtedly took place.

In 1914 Germany had enjoyed a very large measure of Catholic sympathy. In 1939 Catholic sympathy, even in Rome, was it seems certain overwhelmingly on the side of Germany's opponents, so much so that it was probably not easy for Pius XII to pursue his policy of strict neutrality.

The fear of Communism so dominant among Catholics in the 1920's had largely evaporated by the end of the 1930's and when Russia became a belligerent in 1941 there was much indignation on the part of the Axis leaders at the Pope's refusal to treat the German invasion of Soviet territory as a crusade. Dr. Duclos is, however, candid enough despite his own strong sympathies to admit that President Roosevelt's attempt made both personally and through his agents, Mr. Myron C. Taylor and Mr. Harold Tittmann, to induce the Pope to launch what would have amounted to an anti-German crusade was a failure. Pius XII had a deep affection for the German people among whom he had passed so many years, unsatisfactory as were his relations with their Government. The President was also unsuccessful in his effort to bring the Sovereign Pontiff to take an optimistic view of future Soviet religious policy.

It is perhaps surprising that in a book by a Frenchman greater space is not devoted to the relations between France and the Vatican during this period. Dr. Duclos quotes the judgment of the jurist Professor Wedel to the effect that the Government of Vichy was in origin a legal Government which became illegal, a view not generally accepted, as he admits. Legal or illegal the Government which took over the reins of power in the summer of 1940 must have created an unfamiliar sensation at the Vatican. Not since Charles X and not therefore within living memory had there been at the head of the French State a personality so deferential to it as Pétain. Dr. Duclos has learned from the old Marshal's former *chef de cabinet*, A. Lavagne, that he submitted to the Pope his *Déclaration de la Communauté*. Pius XII replied through the Nuncio, Mgr. Valerio Valeri, that he approved of its principles but would have liked a statement concerning the rights of the individual.

On 8 July 1940 the *Osservatore Romano* began to publish eulogistic articles on Pétain's appeals to the civic and moral sense of the nation. As the star of Vichy set these eulogies ceased and on 25 October 1944 the Vatican journal said that the hour of de Gaulle was also the hour of France. As the General was unwilling to receive any diplomats who had been accredited to Vichy Mgr. Valerio Valeri had perforce to retire but not before he had received from the "Government of the Liberation" the grand cross of the Legion of Honour on 20 December 1944. In the previous January, so Dr. Duclos believes, the German authorities were envisaging the removal of the Pope

to Germany and that a residence was being got ready for him at Würzburg in Bavaria. The author quotes a manuscript source in support of this belief.

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

CHARLES I'S SCOTTISH KINGDOM

Scotland under Charles I, by David Mathew (Eyre and Spottiswoode 30s).

MORE THAN ONCE in the course of this excellent book Dr. Mathew makes reference to historical themes that have not yet been fully studied. In fact, much Scottish history is still inadequately documented: even when documents are known to exist, they have frequently not been catalogued or transcribed. There is a great deal of spadework to be done and not much incentive to do it. To the present book Dr. Mathew brings an asset of peculiar value, and one that makes it an outstanding and even an exceptional Scottish historical study. For Scottish history has suffered not only from lack of adequate documentation, but also from those snell Whig winds beneath whose breath it proves a more fragile flower than its English counterpart. (The antithesis has been provided chiefly by the romancers, with their rich but unconvincing tints.) Whiggery peculiarly distorts Scottish history because it can only see it as a process reaching its fulfilment in the Act of Union and the emergence of Great Britain in 1707. But history is not like that. It does not come to an end on this side of Time. It is a conglomerate of human lives, made up of a great fusion of individual problems, all interwoven but recognisable as our own, and ultimately only comprehensible by an acceptance of spiritual values. It is in this light that Dr. Mathew is able to detail with patience and understanding the ravelled background to the wretched policy pursued by Charles I in his Scottish kingdom. It is not always easy to see the Covenanters sympathetically. Their own intolerance becomes infectious. But Dr. Mathew analyses their motives kindly and respectfully, and if he often does not find them very exalted, he always sees them as both human and principled.

Dr. Mathew's range is wide; his copious notes tell us of the houses, furnishings and gardens of the protagonists, their clothes and their personal correspondence, so that a complete picture emerges, in which even the household gods have the place that they inevitably take in men's affairs. As Dr. Mathew remarks in his opening paragraph, "In the seventeenth century the climate of Scottish opinion and the organisation of Scottish social life bore little resemblance to the habits of thought and the money-conscious stratified class system which characterised the southern kingdom. In considering Scotland and

England in the years before the Civil Wars it is difficult to find a common factor." Dr. Mathew succeeds in elucidating the Scottish background because he never tries to interpret it in limiting terms of the English scene.

GEORGE SCOTT-MONCRIEFF

THE NEW DESPOTISM

England under the Tudors, by G. R. Elton (Methuen 25s).

THE PRESENT WORK replaces that of the late A. D. Innes bearing the same title in the eight-volume History of England founded and edited by Sir Charles Oman, and it condenses the results of a great deal of documentary research, much of which has already appeared in Mr. Elton's *Tudor Revolution in Government* (1953). He shows that between the accession of Henry VII and the death of Elizabeth I the government of England was changed from medieval to modern. The reader will ask: how? when? and, by whom? There was no clear distinction between the public and the personal capacity of the medieval king any more than between the national and his private revenue. The ministers were the officers of his household. The great change, as will be seen in this admirable work, consisted in what we now call bureaucratic organisation, the setting up of departments of State directed by men whom we may call ministers and manned by subordinates whom we may almost call officials.

Mr. Elton makes it clear that Henry VII had much more to do with all that than is commonly supposed. That monarch elevated the word *prerogative* to the first place in his political vocabulary. "No one could say exactly what the King's prerogative amounted to, but all agreed that it included fixed rights and an indefinite reserve of power vested in the crown." Henry VII also built up court ceremonial and etiquette supported by lavish expenditure on dress and entertainment, deliberately making those things part of the *instrumenta regni*. His almost freakish legalistic ingenuity comes out in the fact that he fixed 21 August 1485, the day before Bosworth Field, as the first day of his reign, thereby making "traitors" of those who had fought for Richard III in the battle—a trait that was abundantly exemplified in the legislation of his son.

The great innovations were: the development of a committee of the Council into a very powerful judicial tribunal; that proclamations made law as well as promulgated it; that the judges drafted statutes and then interpreted them; and that the executive armed itself with three sinister weapons: the intimidation of juries, espionage and torture.

The main credit, or responsibility, for the vast change is firmly attributed to Thomas Cromwell, and his decisive influence is, naturally, placed between 1530 and 1540. There is perhaps some exaggeration in this and some diminution of Henry's own part. Cromwell suggested the ways and means, persuading the King that all he had to do was to draw up a statute (preferably with a preamble) and put into it whatever he wanted, so that to disobey it would be treason. Pollard called this "taking Parliament into partnership"; but the King's will was the fount and origin of it all. Chapuys says that Cromwell was very powerful with him (in 1533) but decisive steps had been taken before that year and taken by Henry alone.

The responsibility for the Marian persecution is a much-discussed question. Mr. Elton, rather oddly, places it upon the Queen and Pole; both, he says, were personally kind and merciful, but both firmly believed in the necessity of exterminating heresy. Now Mary's own view, as expressed to the Privy Council, was that the heresiarchs deserved harsh punishment but not the ignorant populace whom they had misled. Nor did Pole ever desire a holocaust of heretics. The persecution was really the work of the civil authorities: Parliament, in re-enacting *De Heretico Comburendo*; the Council, in enforcing it; and the sheriffs, mayors and justices of the peace, in hunting out the very people whom Mary said should be spared. As the law stood, the bishops had no option; they had to certify the existence of heresy in the accused in proceedings which they had not initiated.

Among many interesting and valuable features of this new survey is the careful explanation of the social and economic changes brought about by the growth of trade and industry, and, particularly, of the inflation (due to exploration and discovery and the importation of bullion into Europe) which was a dominant factor throughout the sixteenth century. Altogether, a very important and valuable contribution and one that will not easily be superseded.

J. J. DWYER

SHORTER NOTICES

St. Francis of Assisi, by Leonard von Matt and Walter Hauser (Longmans 30s).

THIS BOOK contains the Life of St. Francis, written with a great simplicity worthy of the saint by Fr. Hauser, and translated by Fr. Bullough, O.P. in the same spirit. It was he who translated the Life of St. Pius X by Nello Vian in the same series. These "Lives" are more than well worth reading for their own sake, and this needs to be said

lest we be distracted by the extreme beauty of the photographs. Who can escape the fascination of St. Francis's life, however often it be read? But if the life can be followed by pictures of such surpassing loveliness as these, we are indeed privileged. These photos are concerned not only with Assisi and its immediate neighbourhood, but with almost every place which retains traces or memories of St. Francis. The pictures of churches, castles, even of ordinary little houses and streets almost terrify us, so totally unable are we to create anything remotely as "right" today. Yet all is built with the simplest of straight lines and curves. The very irregularities have their unique Italian charm. The spirit has gone out of us. But if we hope that the intimate communion with St. Francis, offered by these pages, may re-enter us, we dare not forget what self-conquest each step towards his vocation cost him, nor desecrate his memory by remembering only the sweetness of the *Fioretti* which have embalmed him.

The Ancrene Riwele, edited by M. B. Salu, with a Preface by Professor J. R. R. Tolkien and an Introduction and Appendix by Dom G. Sitwell, O.S.B. (Burns and Oates 15s).

THIS "RULE for Anchoresses" was often copied in the early thirteenth century. Miss Salu, lecturer in English at Reading University, has chosen the Cambridge manuscript for her translation into modern English, and Professor Tolkien vouches for her "long familiarity" with this text and research into "peculiarities of its idiom." Indeed the translation reads very smoothly and makes no use of pseudo-archaisms or of ephemeral modernisms. The author does not intend to write a new Rule, but addresses a small group of women known to him, and of whose characters he can judge. In his Introduction Dom Gerard Sitwell at once anticipates two features of his doctrine that readers may regret: one is, the emphasis laid upon temptation, sin and penance; the other, the small attention given to contemplation or the "prayer of union." But at no time do spiritual writers cater for what is congenial merely to the mood likely to be prevalent among their readers; and certainly in our day the very thought of sin has faded amongst (we fear) the majority. The *Riwele* clearly shows that it hopes that those who obey it will reach that prayer which it finds symbolised throughout the love-story of the *Canticle*. Certainly the level on which the fourteenth-century mystics maintain themselves is seldom attained to: at the other extreme, the *Riwele* is English-wise practical, and the directions given to the anchoresses about clothing, food and so forth are downright amusing. This book belongs to the Orchard Books collection and is the first critical yet readable version of the *Riwele* accessible in England.

The Dark Ages, by W. P. Ker (Nelson 15s).

THE CENTENARY of the birth of W. P. Ker has been fittingly commemorated by this new edition of his best known work. Since its first publication fifty-one years ago literary studies have become more specialised and more scientific. Nowadays, the best minds are often occupied with bibliographical or editorial research and rarely with a work of such grace, learning and universal sympathy. In *The Dark Ages* W. P. Ker examines the dim origin of European literature which was suddenly transformed in the twelfth century. At that time the thoughts and forms of modern vernacular literature arose, to go back to the ninth or the eleventh centuries is to find a different world. The languages are more ancient, the tunes of poetry are different and over all is the brooding imagination of a Teutonic people. Only in Latin writing is there continuity of tradition stretching from classical times right beyond the Dark Ages, so that fragments of sixth-century Boethius can be found embedded in Dante and Shakespeare.

The publishers do a grave disservice to the memory of a great scholar when they describe the book in the blurb as "a history of European literature from the fifth century to the Renaissance." This is a gross inaccuracy which should never have occurred.

Cracks in the Cloister, by Brother Cholerick (Sheed and Ward 8s. 6d).

THIS COLLECTION of cartoons presents an amusing series of "cracks about the cloister," as the pen recalls what an observant eye has seen of the foibles and failings of nuns, monks, and reverend mothers. Has the book the air of one retailing family-jokes outside the family circle? Yet the family of the Church is wide, and no one is surprised by the incongruities of life inside a convent or outside of it. Is it unfair to pillory the pretentiousness and silliness which are sometimes found inside the cloister as well as outside of it without presenting also the other side of the picture? But the edifying side is familiar enough, and the book does make one wonder why such illustrations have rarely been used by those who write wise books for our instruction. Laughter would surely help where exhortations fail.

Marriage: A Medical and Sacramental Study, by Alan Keenan, O.F.M. and John Ryan, M.B. (Sheed and Ward 16s).

"FIRSTLY, to present ideal marriage and the problems of marriage . . . as the doctor sees them. Secondly, to present marriage as the priest sees it. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, to demonstrate the practical link between the two aspects." That is an ambitious programme, and one far too difficult to secure all-round satisfaction even when handled by a priest and doctor so well qualified.

Perhaps because both are busy men, one gets the impression of haste, sometimes obscuring, sometimes eliminating meaning, as on page 20: "The difficulties of the non-Catholic doctor . . ." And the criticism against "denominational medicine" is not really met unless the authors dig much deeper into the foundations of their "separate Catholic medical clinics."

A certain superficiality creeps into the priest's contribution from time to time. If it is desirable in a book on marriage to institute a comparison between St. Joseph and other saints, where is the proof that "certainly his holiness is above that even of St. John the Baptist"—the latter unique in Our Lord's words?

And is it "the duty of the doctor . . . if his own moral principles are involved . . . to express these to the patient"? (p. 316). The questions put under "Conclusions" are not all well framed, and some of the answers are unconvincing.

Section three on the Sacramental Aspects of Marriage follows the modern trend in emphasis on the holiness of the married state. Without it, the family will never be the regular seed-plot for dedicated virginity.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, THE MONTH.

DEAR SIR,

In the *Gramophone Notes* of your January issue, which has just come into my hands, Mr. Edmund Rubbra states that Gabriele D'Annunzio is "a proud pseudonym for a much less high-sounding name, Giacompo Rapagnetta."

The theory that D'Annunzio's real name was Giacompo (more usually Gaetano) Rapagnetta was conclusively demonstrated to be false some twenty years ago in a fully documented book, *La vera origine familiare e il vero cognome del poeta abruzzese Gabriele D'Annunzio*, Lanciano, 1938, by Amadeo Rapagnetta. Gabriele's father was born Rapagnetta, but was legally adopted in childhood by his maternal uncle, Antonio D'Annunzio, whose surname he thenceforward assumed. Thus, his children had every right to call themselves D'Annunzio too. The birth certificate of Gabriele D'Annunzio, made out in the name of — Gabriele D'Annunzio—is reproduced between pp. 62 and 63 of Signor Rapagnetta's book, and puts an end to all doubt on the right of the poet to his remarkable name.

I remain, Sir,

Yours, etc.,

CONOR FAHY

17th February, 1956

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THE SETTLEMENT OF THE HOLY CHILD, POPLAR, E.14, destroyed by bombs, can now be rebuilt. There will be rooms for resident workers, club-rooms; a lecture- or committee-room; reading room, etc. Work will be done as before among the sick, parents and children; all forms of welfare work; means for athletics; summer and other holidays. Gifts urgently asked to supplement the compensation due.

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ONE of the great occupational risks of business life under the pressure of to-day is that the practical man of affairs neglects his outside reading, and all too easily falls into a narrow circle of immediate preoccupations. There is always loss in this, and the Catholic business or professional man, as a member of the Church Universal, has a particularly strong reason for keeping his mind open to wider horizons. Certainly it was never more necessary than now to follow world happenings. A direct chain of causes and effects ties every business to economical changes in the world, which are themselves as often the consequence as the cause of changes in men's political and social ideas. These ideas in their turn come out of the religions, or irreligions, of contemporary man.

In many countries the Catholic Church is at the heart of the battle of ideas. Cardinal Manning's saying that "all great quarrels between men are at bottom theological" suggests that there is, in fact, no better starting-point or background for understanding the modern world than a Catholic one. Because of this approach and background,

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For the President

Subject: [Illegible]

Reference is made to [Illegible]

It is recommended that [Illegible]

Very respectfully,
[Illegible Signature]

Enclosure

Approved: [Illegible Signature]

Date: [Illegible]